

ARNIE

A Handbook to Support Local Stakeholders for Better Relations Between Africa and EU/rope and beyond

Imagined and compiled by **Sylvia Amann – inforelais**
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International Cooperation Toolkit

Author

Sylvia AMANN, inforelais, office@inforelais.org



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Why We Need This Handbook ... and Your Engagement!

AN EDITORIAL NOTE BY SYLVIA AMANN

This handbook aims at helping you to strengthen your intercontinental and international cooperation by the means of art, culture, creative industries and (cultural) heritage. It has a **special focus on local-to-local cooperation** and to enhance the related understanding of relevance, potential and need for engagement. The publication is **built on experiences and inspiring practices with a focus on the African and European continents** and includes some **additional considerations related to bigger local cultural events like capitals of culture**.

You might wonder why you as an artist, cultural manager, director of a cultural organisation or entrepreneur, local (culture) policymaker and other stakeholder on local level should engage for international cooperation. You will argue that the daily realities in the cultural sectors are already burdensome. Furthermore, you will explain that (culture, local) politicians are not interested in international cooperation. Maybe your organisation had bad experiences for obtaining visa. International cooperation is not an easy task. It may need substantial collection of information, competences, longer-run perspectives as your partners are not just a few metres further down the street. You might feel that „this international thing“ is just too big.

However, think about the big ecological or digital transformations of which the populations start to experience the effects. Not one single small or big country on earth will be able to manage these alone. **The design of updated international cooperation frameworks reflecting the needs of wide strata of populations requires the involvement of many and not of the few already defining international (trade) relations. Art and culture are able to generate these safe spaces of intercontinental encounters**, to debate different (daily) realities and to come up with common ways forward. The local level is especially important in this regard as it allows the interaction with wide strata of the population. Global cities have already started to engage in this sense and to become actors of change on the international level, but this movement needs to be broader in order to be representative for many people.

Some might still say that it is difficult to advance in international cooperation as there was (and still is) a difficult common history of colonisation, totalitarianism, of uneven economic relations and of cultural hierarchies. We can observe that the frameworks of international cooperation of states are not advancing well towards a peaceful world of reciprocal appreciative relationships. Is it a valuable alternative to take these frameworks now for granted? **The local level can be a territory of international cooperation which is not so burdened by national (nationalistic) narratives. Cities and regions have the potential to open up spaces of conversations or initiate intercontinental healing processes. And these can go far beyond the „traditional“ debates on restitution of objects.** These can be a most-needed enlargement of international perspectives, of just mobility and concrete solidarity.

We have still not convinced you? Then go international for the professional development of your artistic endeavour or of your (private, public) cultural institutions. **There is a growing wealth of opportunities on many (more and more) continents for cultural projects. Emerging middle classes on all continents ask for cultural services, new museums are built in a wealth of cities and regions worldwide and biennials established, international art markets boom, many cities and regions become interested in the professionalisation of cultural development and cultural policy.** These global developments enable the cultural



sectors and the creative industries to evolve positively. Export and internationalisation are beneficial for your economic basis. It is an investment in your resilience as you depend not on a single territory and the related opportunities which might disappear suddenly. **Digital opportunities allow for much easier reach to new international markets and new audiences.** The Global South has considerable related dynamics, the Global North will not stand behind. It is not about cultural economics alone, international cooperation has also **considerable positive effects with peer learning, getting early access to important information, to weak signals of future developments and inspiration for the own work** – a truly enriching experience, if well done.

This handbook supports you with doing international good and better. We have identified five areas of main attention and of action which you can apply – even when the international frameworks and rules will not improve immediately. We can be all actors of positive change, each person in the cultural and local ecosystems can make cooperation better if engaged and working with empathy with those from abroad.

**We invite you to join
this truly collective
international culture trip!**



ARNIE – Five Areas of Main Attention and Action

We provide you with an overview on the five main areas of attention and action you could focus on when planning and implementing international cultural cooperation projects with a special focus on local-to-local cooperation. The recommendations from this handbook build mainly on Africa-EU/rope experiences. They are valid for all kinds and geographic directions of cooperation related to art, culture, creative industries and heritage. Please refer to the thematic chapters and the inspiring good practices descriptions in this handbook for further insight and support!



ARNIE – Accessibility to Co-Production, Finance, and Infrastructures

This chapter highlights the wide range of access barriers to which promoters of intercontinental cultural cooperation projects are confronted. It explains a range of actions how to overcome these obstacles based on the inspirational practices collected in the framework of the DECONFINING project. It refers mainly to backgrounds from EU/rope and Africa and is complemented with some international inputs.

We need to overcome the barriers!

“We think that the wide range of access barriers is not sufficiently taken into account. The wider understanding of these obstacles is far too limited. Therefore, based on an enlarged comprehension, considerable effort is needed to achieve systematically on just cooperation. This concerns both project promoters as well as those providing support frameworks like financing for intercontinental culture activities or related training. Furthermore, the local level and the local population are most often still underrepresented in international exchanges.”

Which types of access barriers in international cooperation?

We have identified a range of potential barriers for intercontinental cultural cooperation based on the inspiring practices in this publication. You can use the following **checklist to analyse the framework of barriers** for your endeavour:

- Information Lacks
- Participation Difficulties
- Mobility Obstacles
- Own Know-How Deficit
- Expert Know-How Access Obstacles
- Stereotypic Views Exposure
- Co-Production Obstacles
- Selection Criteria Hurdles
- Finance Non-Availability
- Infrastructure Access Obstacles
- Rules and Regulations Obstacles
- Rights Enforcement Problems
- Hate Speech and Violence Exposure
- Other

The cultural eco-systems are full of barriers and codes inherent to the artistic and cultural scenes. Many of those are being even more problematic for intercontinental cultural cooperation. Bigger distances tend to be burdensome to ensure full access. Being conscious about these obstacles is an important first element in a journey to overcome the barriers.



5 main objectives related to better accessibility

- **Widening the understanding of the wide range of access barriers** related to international cooperation
- **Ensuring sustainable intercontinental cooperation frameworks,** funding and ecosystems
- **Facilitating of the international development of the creative industries** and fair access to creative markets
- **Improving safe international cooperation** in view of places of travel and residence
- **Engaging for fair international cooperation** with your peers on local, national and international levels

10 main actions to overcome barriers for better international cooperation

We provide a broad range of proposals for actions. Choose what you need and what you can manage!

- **Co-identify and address systematically access barriers** which are relevant for your cooperation endeavour with your international project partners. The ARNIE Checklist related to types of barriers might be helpful in this regard.
- **Develop and use databases of artists and cultural organisations interested in international cooperation and co-creation.** Publishing of works, curatorial concepts and creations will help organising further international cooperation projects. Public promotion of international artists is another tool. Make information easily available in view of language(s) used and with (local, international) media cooperations (e. g. digital, radio)
- **Invest in state-of-the-art financial support programmes providing a whole range of accompanying services.** Make calls widely visible and ensure accessibility for international artists and creative entrepreneurs. Co-develop selection criteria with your partners. Train applicants in view of the call requirements.
- **Establish sustainable cooperation between funding structures on those continents involved**

in a cooperation. If you are a funder, this can be a direct cooperation. Project promoters can opt for common reach-out to funding structures.

- **Provide travel grants and mobility support co-implemented with your international or intercontinental cooperation partners.** Broad representativeness in selection juries is a good way forward. Take into account the travel frameworks of your target groups in view of availability of transport options, price levels and security issues.
- **Invest in fair payment and ensure reciprocity of exchange of know-how and information to strengthen creative eco-systems and markets.** Cultural entrepreneurship is crucial for the positive development of local culture eco-systems on many continents. Working for free is for most of your partners not really an option (lack of employment or public funding, etc.).
- **Ensure that visa procedures are not too burdensome for artists and involved cultural organisations.** Involving professional agencies with related experience might be a helpful approach. You can also engage in networks to promote better visa frameworks on the international scale. Partner with public institutions on local level to take over the co-responsibilities related to visa requirements (e. g. vouching, insurances).
- **Develop caring and safe environments for local-to-local intercontinental cooperation on all places of operation.** State-of-the-art residency, trainee and visiting programmes can be a good option. Cooperation with embassies allows for receiving early warning alerts. Address the issues related to artists and cultural operators at risk (e. g. violence, persecution).
- **Establish inclusive operational settings in your project management structures or in your organisation as a whole.** Recruiting staff and experts from a range of (international, diverse) backgrounds will considerably improve the accessibility of your projects.
- **Engage for modernised international cultural relations and updated international cultural management to strengthen international frameworks and institutions.** These efforts could also result in innovative cooperation frameworks and the building-up of new institutions and networks on the global scale e. g. like the fair culture movement.



Partners for engaging together related to access barriers

We list a range of organisations and other partners who might be useful to involve in your activities. The following **checklist for partner identification** can help you to find those which are relevant for your international activities:

- Cultural organisations (private, public): residencies, biennials, festivals, museums, libraries, archives, capitals of culture organisations, etc.
- Cultural administration: cultural departments, cultural ministries, national cultural institutes
- Artists, curators and creative content producers
- Creative entrepreneurs and companies
- Engaged individuals and involved staff
- Local and international NGOs
- Networks of all kinds of stakeholders: public, private members, sectoral approaches, etc.
- Communities and their organisations
- Expats, diasporas and their organisations
- Formal and informal education, research institutions as well as other knowledge owners
- Funding programme owners: international, national, public, private
- Training programme owners: academic, formal, informal
- Information sources owners
- Media, publishing houses and database owners: local, national, international, grassroots, professional
- International organisations and transnational secretariats
- Decisionmakers and politicians
- Other

3 main recommendations related to the additional potential of capitals of culture

We highlight 3 key areas of attention for reducing barriers in the framework of international cultural cooperation reflecting the additional opportunities of Capitals of Culture and similar high-visibility and long-term initiatives to overcome accessibility problems:

- **Ensure that calls and funding opportunities launched or promoted in the context of Capitals of Culture are accessible for artistes and creatives from different continents** in cooperation with local culture stakeholders. Related intercontinental training sessions might be a helpful tool to enhance reach out and accessibility.
- **Involve diasporas and local international communities as well as volunteers from other continents in the teams implementing Capitals of Culture** to ensure that the reflection on intercontinental dimensions is included in the daily work and the cultural programmes.
- **Build-up long-term cultural cooperation as a reference practice for intercontinental accessibility.** These could be also large-scale demonstrator projects as a reference for engagement of local governments and cities in better accessible international cultural cooperation.



ARNIE – Reflection on Common Histories and Dialogue

This chapter highlights how the understanding on common histories and the requirements for more dialogue can be addressed on local level. It highlights a range of actions how to successfully implement related endeavours based on the learning taking from the inspirational practices collected in the framework of the DECONFINING project. It refers mainly to backgrounds from EU/rope and Africa and is complemented with some international inputs.

We need to talk much more!

“We think that our common histories on the globe require much more dialogue. The current considerable lack of exchange impacts our future(s) in a negative manner. Future challenges and opportunities are deeply anchored in connected systems on the globe. This concerns not only trade but a wide range of areas like water, wind, and soil or ideas, cultures and art. A better understanding of common pasts and futures could help wide range of populations to connect in a new way with people from abroad, to re-appropriate solidarity and to better cope with transformations.”

Which types of common histories?

We provide examples for types of common histories which might be relevant to structure a related debate. You can use the following **checklist to identify common histories** in your territory:

- Geographies of histories like (perceived) borders and peripheries
- Histories of politics and influence
- Histories of “ordinary” people
- Archived and non-archived histories
- “Western” and “Non-Western” histories
- Art and culture histories
- Histories of routes of ideas, merchandise, people, policies, ...
- Histories of (access to) resources
- Histories of flows of wind, water and soils
- Histories of interactions of food, fauna, and flora
- Histories related to different periods of interaction
- Other

We recommend to think broadly about local global interrelations. A sole focus on colonial histories – while certainly present in all territories on the globe – can be a too narrow approach to connect with a wide range of stakeholders in your territory.



5 main objectives related to common histories and dialogue

- **Enhancing the reflection on (persisting) colonial relationships** as well as related effects on international cooperation
- **Contextualising intercontinental cooperation in local cultural initiatives** and providing reflection frameworks for local populations
- **Mobilising for updated perceptions of shared history** and related common actions
- **Involving a wide range of voices to ensure representativeness** and narratives sovereignty
- **Ensuring safe spaces of dialogue** including local-to-local intercontinental perspectives on (common) pasts and futures

10 main actions to address common histories for better international cooperation

We provide a broad range of actions. Choose what you need and what you can manage!

- **Research the international dimension of your local context** to better understand the local-global interactions in your territory. Best options are co-designed research activities with international partners to enhance the common understanding of common pasts. Arts-based research could comprise residency programmes.
- **Ensure that common histories are going far beyond questions of restitution.** Invest in a broad and specific range of topics on common histories like histories of power, people's histories, etc. and connect intercontinentally with the common realities of people. Patterns of oppression are similar on all continents. Based on these broader considerations new intercontinental and local narratives of connectivity could emerge.
- **Understand that societies are still considerably influenced by stereotypic views.** Starting dialogue, exchange or cooperation from false assumptions will not lead to sustainable settings of trust and collaboration. This concerns e. g. also

perspectives on periphery and underdevelopment depending on standpoints and on (political) priorities. The perceived remoteness of (parts of) Africa or the Arctic are related good examples.

- **Avoid defining reflection on common histories and dialogue inside institutional silos.** Common histories are having stakeholders in different territories where interaction took and/or still takes place. Ensure appropriate involvement (settings) for those voices less heard. Intercontinental stakeholder groups can be related appropriate tools.
- **Invest in eco-systems of knowledge owners and institutions like archives and museums.** Reflection on common pasts cannot be based solely on western-type academic knowledge. Local networks of stakeholders, citizens science activities or crowd sources exhibitions are good ways forward. Future museums and places of knowledge could emerge from these broader approaches.
- **Ensure that knowledge owners are honoured in terms of visibility and (monetary, non-monetary) remuneration.** Address narrative sovereignty by all knowledge owners. Invest in the accessibility of the collection e. g. by the means of open archives.
- **Prepare local and international audience development and engagement strategies** involving the population, the educational sector as well as the range of international communities in your territory. Engage with all types of target groups from kids to silver agers in frameworks of formal and informal exchange.
- **Invest in digital (low-threshold) spaces of access to common histories.** Tools like podcasts or videos allow for a better intercontinental access and interaction. Digital tools also comprise online publications, online archives, conference streaming and conference documentations, screening of movies. Complement these formats with dialogue.
- **Ensure broad visibility of common activities related to the reflection on common pasts and present.** International festivals and biennials are very good multipliers. (Colonial, Cultural) infrastructures and public spaces are other anchor points to reach-out to large crowds and to organise international interaction formats. Initiatives in the public space also have potential to heal from the past.
- **Dedicate sufficient time for intercontinental exchange on common histories and futures.** A one-off debate is a starting point, but a range of dialogues co-developed and co-implemented with



your international partners is the better option. You can also engage in networks dedicated to the reflection on the common pasts and working for common futures.

Partners for engaging together in view of common histories and dialogue

We list a range of organisations and other partners who might be useful to involve in your activities. The following **checklist for partner identification** can help you to find those which are relevant for your international activities:

- Cultural organisations (private, public): residencies, biennials, festivals, museums, libraries, archives, capitals of culture organisations, etc.
- Cultural administration: cultural departments, cultural ministries, national cultural institutes
- Artists, curators and creative content producers
- Creative entrepreneurs and companies
- Engaged individuals and involved staff
- Local and international NGOs
- Networks of all kinds of stakeholders: public, private members, sectoral approaches, etc.
- Communities and their organisations
- Expats, diasporas and their organisations
- Formal and informal education, research institutions as well as other knowledge owners
- Funding programme owners: international, national, public, private
- Training programme owners: academic, formal, informal
- Information sources owners
- Media, publishing houses and database owners: local, national, international, grassroots, professional
- International organisations and transnational secretariats
- Decisionmakers and politicians
- Other

3 main recommendations related to the additional potential of capitals of culture

Capitals of Culture and similar initiatives with strategic long-term plans and potential considerable visibility have a very special framework in order to be more ambitious in reaching a better understanding of common histories and to considerably enhance international and intercontinental dialogue. We highlight 3 key areas of attention:

- **Use momentum to address the (difficult) parts of the past and future histories in your city.** This implies building-up sustainable intercontinental relations with those parts in the world for which your territory had or still have (negative / positive) impact.
- **Develop lasting international exchange programmes with your educational sectors on common histories.** Involve local and international partners from research, schools, and lifelong learning backgrounds for a sustainable anchorage of dialogue.
- **Invest in places of common histories in order to make these accessible in the long run and to further reflections by a wide range of populations.** Bigger cultural events like capitals of culture might also dispose of the budget to combine advanced physical and digital spaces.



ARNIE – Networking on the Globe and for Sustainable Partnerships

This chapter investigates how networks and networking enable better international cultural cooperation and which specific role the local level can play. It summarizes the learnings in the context of the DECONFINING project and the related collection of inspiring practices from networks on the African continent and from EU/rope enriched with some international experiences.

We need to meet more frequently!

“We think that international networking plays a central role to (re-)connect people in the long run. While international politics as well as multinationals define the future on earth, international interaction of local residents is still limited – especially outside big urban centres. Networks are tools to remedy this situation as they can provide opportunities to gather, to talk, to exchange, to learn and to engage together. These structures whether formal or informal have a considerable connecting power and can facilitate the involvement of many in international partnerships.”

Which types of networks for better international cooperation?

Intercontinental and international networks can be manifold. You can use the following **checklist to identify the types of networks** most appropriate for your endeavour:

- Formal / Informal
- Permanent / Temporary
- Local / Regional / National / Transnational / Intercontinental / International
- Physical / Online / Hybrid
- Vertical / Horizontal
- Thematic / Not thematic
- Closed to a group of participants / Open for a wide range of participants / Combined
- Other

All kinds of combinations can be envisaged. Your choice will depend on your context, objectives, and operational / financial capacity. Engaged individuals can be also great networkers if the network objectives are chosen in accordance with personal capacities.



5 main objectives related to networking

- **Building-up sustainable partnerships** for intercontinental and international exchange
- **Providing inclusive exchange settings** for co-reflection and co-creation on international level
- **Establishing of just mobility frameworks** to ensure fair participation options for stakeholders
- **Encouraging new and upcoming stakeholders** as well as of less represented voices to engage in international networks
- **Promoting the added value of networking** in view of synergies and influence of like-minded stakeholders from the globe

10 main actions related to networks for better international cooperation

We provide a broad range of actions. Choose what you need and what you can manage!

- **Enhance the understanding of internationality in your territories.** Start with a mapping of internationally connected people and organisations in your city or region. This can be a simple list of organisations and contacts or deeper research. You can also opt for the development of an international networking strategy. Ensure to apply a broad understanding of international relations including less heard voices.
- **Understand every network partner as an own network of contacts and opportunities to connect with (further) people.** Organise workshops and round table meetings with local and international partners involving artists, researchers, curators, local culture-related decision-makers and the international communities in your territories.
- **Consider involving the wider eco-system of people and organisations engaged for intercontinental cooperation** including those outside the culture eco-system like e. g. bilateral business support organisations, international companies,

universities or individual expats. Fair trade and similar initiatives might be also ready to join.

→ **Take part in existing networks related to international and cultural cooperation.** There is no need to build-up own networks for each international cooperation. A wealth of networks is already operational. These networks are a good opportunity to contribute to related cultural policy objectives from your side too.

→ **Try to enlarge the number of main network facilitators** and those being the key persons for intercontinental cooperation to ensure sustainability and to avoid burn-out situations. Far too many (lasting) networks still depend on individuals. Public-private-partnerships could have stabilising effects.

→ **Connect the local and intercontinental networks** by paying careful attention to the settings of (online) meetings, to provide a safe environment for all participants. Invest carefully in face-to-face meetings in order to enhance connectivity of network members and to encourage friendships. Local networking is as important as investing time in building intercontinental networks for achieving commitment on the ground.

→ **Decentralise physical meetings of the networks** as much as possible (beyond major capital cities) to allow just participation from a range of people. Ensure related just mobility frameworks depending on the available transport options and security issues. Ensure the involvement of artistic activities or the combination with festivals and events.

→ **Invest in a culture of welcoming for your physical meetings** by providing a range of interaction moments between international guests and local residents. These could be e. g. artists talks or local radio shows, common educational activities or parties and celebrations. Common spare time activities allow for deepening contacts.

→ **Understand networks are great places for common and reciprocal learning.** These can include study visits and excursions, traineeships, intercontinental mentoring, (touring) summer courses organised by international networks, or co-created conferences. Informal (online) gatherings, coffee talks and meet-ups of peers to seek advice. International good practice collections, publications and databases are further tools.

→ **Bring forward international cultural policy agendas within networks.** Networks are able



to raise awareness to important topics of international cooperation like just mobility requirements or questions of access to international markets. Common intercontinental activism and campaigns are related tools. Funding and visa issue can be addressed in view of policymaking as well as from a service point of view.

Partners for engaging together in networks and networking

We list a range of organisations and other partners who might be useful to involve in your activities. The following **checklist for partner identification** can help you to find those which are relevant for your international activities:

- Cultural organisations (private, public): residencies, biennials, festivals, museums, libraries, archives, capitals of culture organisations, etc.
- Cultural administration: cultural departments, cultural ministries, national cultural institutes
- Artists, curators and creative content producers
- Creative entrepreneurs and companies
- Engaged individuals and involved staff
- Local and international NGOs
- Networks of all kinds of stakeholders: public, private members, sectoral approaches, etc.
- Communities and their organisations
- Expats, diasporas and their organisations
- Formal and informal education, research institutions as well as other knowledge owners
- Funding programme owners: international, national, public, private
- Training programme owners: academic, formal, informal
- Information sources owners
- Media, publishing houses and database owners: local, national, international, grassroots, professional
- International organisations and transnational secretariats
- Decisionmakers and politicians
- Other

3 main recommendations related to the additional potential of capitals of culture

Capitals of Culture and similar initiatives with strategic long-term plans and potential considerable visibility have a very special framework in order to be more ambitious in reaching objectives related to international and intercontinental networking. We highlight 3 key areas of attention:

→ **Contribute to the decentralisation of international cultural exchange and related networking.** Networks are still too often concentrated in big urban centres. Many of the European Capitals of Culture are currently organised in smaller cities and regions – an opportunity to broaden the geographies of international cooperation.

→ **Use the (existing, formal, non-formal) networks of Capitals of Culture initiatives for strategic networking and international cooperation.** Capitals of Culture and similar endeavours often benefit of strong existing networks (e. g. the EU, Africa, East Asia). Networking these networks has a considerable internationalization accelerator potential.

→ **Provide broad frameworks for international guest programmes and sustainable networks creation.** These could target cultural policymakers, researchers, students, trainees, artists, cultural managers, activists and many other more. Support the organisation of and facilitate international meetings to ease networking in the long run.



ARNIE – Information from Research and Data for Communication

This chapter provides insight related to information and research contexts for intercontinental (cultural) cooperation based on the inspirational practices collected in the framework of the DECONFINING project. It refers mainly to backgrounds from EU/rope and Africa and is complemented with some international inputs.

We need to be better informed!

“We think that substantial information and research is lacking in the international context. Systems of knowledge are still far too much concentrated on Western academic approaches. Information on connectivity between local and global is fragmented. Meaningful local-to-local intercontinental cooperation requires a sound information and research basis embedded in a network of caretakers and sourced from a wide range of stakeholders and knowledge owners covering all continents involved in the endeavours.”

Which types of information sources and knowledge generation?

We have identified a range of information and knowledge sources and owners in the practices highlighted in this publication. You can use the following **checklist to identify the types of information sources and knowledge owners** most important for your endeavour:

- Academic / Expert /
Indigenous / Art-Based
- Local / National / Transnational
/ Intercontinental / International
/ Combined
- Historic / Art / Events / Cultural
Policy / Cultural Research / Cultural
Management / Creative Entrepreneurship
- Analogue / Digital / Hybrid / Text /
Image / Sound / Objects / Combined
- Formal / Informal / Contracted / Inhouse
/ Grassroots / Indigenous Practices
- Individual Communicators /
Journalists / Media NGOs / Professional
Media Companies / Institutional
Communication e. g. like by
dedicated Museum departments
- Other

Information resources are manifold as those organisations able to communicate (intercontinentally). Opening-up to indigenous knowledge providers and to a range of citizens science activities has the potential to mobilise larger crowds in information exchange and research. Art and



culture have a huge potential to communicate about a range of issues including intercontinental relationships. They provide an additional layer to more traditional learning and information transmission. An occasion you should not miss!

5 main objectives related to information and communication

- **Furthering the understanding of the added value of international information** and know-how exchange
- **Reflection on the interconnectivity of rights as well as obligations to be informed**
- **Understanding the communication potential of art and culture** to connect with a range of intercontinental perspectives and realities
- **Reflecting on patterns of (intercontinental, local) knowledge production** and also using beyond Western academic approaches
- **Investing in research on fair and just communication** related to intercontinental cooperation based on solidarity

10 main actions related to information for better international cooperation

We provide a broad range of actions. Choose what you need and what you can manage!

- **Collect information on local global interconnectivity in your territory.** This might concern historic or geographic frameworks, current and past trade relations, information on cooperation in education and research as well as valuable information for supporting the management of international cooperation e. g. like databases of artists.
- **Systematically collect information from international cultural and artistic exchanges.** These can include curatorial concepts, artworks from international artists accessible in public

spaces or documentations from international festivals. Ensure a good accessibility of this visual and text-based information to a wide range of strata of population.

→ **Understand that a lot of intercontinental information is available on local level.** Related resources can be historians, local companies with international relations, museums, and archives as well as international tourism-related backgrounds. International staff, students and expats can be additional sources of information and great global disseminators.

→ **Consider in your plans that the collection of information is a process which requires time.** You can already start when not all the information is collected. Shared platforms of common information and knowledge are good backbones for common data use.

→ **Address the issue of western academic research** which can cause considerable barriers for a wide range of knowledge and information collectors working in other contexts. Discuss how to overcome these barriers of knowledge generation. Also honour immaterial sources of knowledge e. g. songs and stories. Involve art-based information and knowledge.

→ **Ensure broad access to information and knowledge.** Privilege low-threshold tools for interactions with the collected information and knowledge for a wide range of stakeholders and for citizens. Allow for touching and exploring wherever possible and investigate updated ways of experiencing and accessing information e. g. by AR and VR.

→ **Use digital:** Populations are more and more at ease with digital information access and exchange. Especially in many countries of the Global South the digital dimensions are well developed. An area from which the Global North could also take further inspiration. Use the wide range of available digital tools including smart phone and build these on the basis of digital or digitised content.

→ **Develop lasting partnerships with local and international media,** journalists and other stakeholders for information dissemination. Cooperations between e. g. local radios have the potential to reach-out to many local people. Social media groups might be useful for peer groups and influencers. Inviting international journalists can



help to shape the external perception of a territory. You can also build-up own media channels.

→ **Invest in research and information related to international cultural relations policy** and management as well as common learning of partners. These can be cultural policy summer schools, joint university degrees and masterclasses, intercontinental training courses or peer exchanges. Building-up of online platforms for access to funding, to international markets and mobility options or databases for international partner search.

→ **Carefully honour the owners of knowledge, information, and research output** and be accurate in view of the respect of copyrights and indigenous contexts. The international dimensions of intellectual property could be further addressed in view of sovereignty of narratives and the handling of immaterial expressions, knowledge and information as well as related international governance frameworks.

Partners for engaging together related to information and knowledge

We list a range of organisations and other partners who might be useful to involve in your activities. The following **checklist for partner identification** can help you to find those which are relevant for your international activities:

- Cultural organisations (private, public): residencies, biennials, festivals, museums, libraries, archives, capitals of culture organisations, etc.
- Cultural administration: cultural departments, cultural ministries, national cultural institutes
- Artists, curators and creative content producers
- Creative entrepreneurs and companies
- Engaged individuals and involved staff
- Local and international NGOs
- Networks of all kinds of stakeholders: public, private members, sectoral approaches, etc.
- Communities and their organisations
- Expats, diasporas and their organisations

- Formal and informal education, research institutions as well as other knowledge owners
- Funding programme owners: international, national, public, private
- Training programme owners: academic, formal, informal
- Information sources owners
- Media, publishing houses and database owners: local, national, international, grassroot, professional
- International organisations and transnational secretariats
- Decisionmakers and politicians
- Other

3 main recommendations related to the additional potential of capitals of culture

Capitals of Culture and similar initiatives with strategic long-term plans and potential considerable visibility can further contribute to the information and research objectives for enhanced intercontinental cooperation. We recommend 3 key areas of attention:

- **Engage for long-term cooperation with the communities of information, knowledge, and research owners** on different continents by connecting the local with the intercontinental dimensions. These can be also international common publishing maintained after the end of a Capital of Culture year.
- **Develop lasting instruments like intercontinental (digital) archives based on common collection of knowledge.** This can also concern the knowledge generated in the framework of CoC programmes like concepts of international curators and podcast of international gatherings.
- **Invest in intercontinental communication strategies and long-term international media partnerships** as an integral part of the CoC branding and dissemination activities. Carefully involve (culture) journalists beyond the local scope in close cooperation with your international partner organisations.



ARNIE – Empowerment of Professionals and Audiences

This chapter is dedicated to lifelong learning and how the empowerment of professionals and audiences can be improved. These training options are important pillars for sustainable international cultural relations. We highlight a range of actions how to successfully implement related endeavours based on the learning taking from the inspirational practices collected in the framework of the DECONFINING project. These inputs refer mainly to backgrounds from EU/rope and Africa and is complemented with some international inputs.

We need to learn more from each other!

“We think that all are learners and all are teachers during our whole life span. Each project or international endeavour is a learning journey. International relations seem to be far away from the daily realities of many people. This leads to hesitations from many to engage. Accompanying local professionals and audiences is required. Safe spaces of learning and exchanging are needed to generate motivation to cooperate which are backed with support programmes as well as substantial investment in (formal, informal) skills acquirement.”

Which types of skills needs for empowered international cooperation?

A range of specific know-how is required for international (cultural) cooperation. You can use the following **checklist to identify the specific skills needs** for your international endeavour:

- Communication skills
- Language skills
- Networking skills
- International project management skills
- Co-creation skills
- Collecting information skills
- Sharing and restitution skills
- Digital skills
- Policymaking skills
- Social competences like interest, empathy, trust, solidarity
- Celebration skills to enhance the feeling of community and friendship
- Other skills

It can be also a good way forward to look for cooperation with organisations having experience in international cultural cooperation. It is important to clearly define target groups of international cooperation and to understand their requirements for empowerment. Key target groups can be cultural managers, artists, curators, heritage sites owners, populations, journalists and decision-makers. Local stakeholder groups are tools to



find out more about their specific needs and how these could be addressed with a collective effort.

5 main objectives related to empowerment

- **Evolving international cooperation to generate better motivation for collaboration**
- **Improving the professionalisation of those in charge of international (cultural) relations including on local level**
- **Investing in sustainable learning environments** for international cultural co-management and creative entrepreneurship development
- **Connecting better academic and other programmes for (professional, lifelong) learning** as well as international recognition of qualifications
- **Dedicating special attention to prepare the next generation of international culture professionals**

10 main actions related to empowerment for better international cooperation

We provide a broad range of actions. Choose what you need and what you can manage!

- **Understand that human beings are affecting the nature of international relations and being affected by international exchanges.** The human dimension of international (culture, trade, other) relations cannot be addressed by technocratic approaches. Consider fears and prejudices when inviting on a journey of international cooperation.
- **Evolve intercontinental projects in the spirit of a permanent learning endeavour for all those involved in the activities.** Related actions might comprise training courses or offers of interaction, community-building as well as hosting together of international guest or trainees. Ensure that lessons learned from interaction are systematically collected.
- **Include an educational and learning dimension in all your international projects to**

professionalise local experts and audiences. Build these programmes on an analysis of skills needs on local level and how these connect with international challenges and opportunities. Needs analysis can be advanced investigations or do-it-yourself.

→ **Understand that learning frameworks and traditions might differ from continent-to-continent.** Co-create the intercontinental (formal, informal) training offers with your international project partners. You can also add train-the-trainer workshops for more sustainable learning ecosystems Go beyond academic learning. Raise awareness on the need of the international recognition of (formal, informal) qualifications.

→ **Involve all in empowerment and learning activities which are interacting in international cultural projects.** All are learners and experts – cultural stakeholders, researchers, artists, staff and decisionmakers as well as populations of all ages. Support sharing of competences of “key-connectors” even when they are “only” individuals. Empower local populations to interact internationally e. g. with volunteer programmes.

→ **Allow for a wide range of topics for which you provide learning and exchanging to enable the empowerment related to international exchange for huger local crowds.** Exchange also on failures and difficulties in order to enhance learning. You can also work across sectors and silos e. g. on culture and tourism or on art and ecology.

→ **Ensure substantial support by teachers and caretakers when young people are involved in intercontinental learning and empowerment initiatives.** Investigate options for physical exchanges for the young generation in order to provide access to the very diverse daily realities of young people on the globe.

→ **Take care of suitable frameworks of translation in order to ensure communication during empowerment endeavours.** Professional service providers or multilingual individuals are ready to help out. Universities can be further related cooperation partners. Make training modules available for large crowds e. g. by the means of MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses). Course documentations could be provided online and translated.

→ **Empower decision-makers to better understand the frameworks of international cultural cooperation.** Special intercontinental training and peer exchanging frameworks for and with decision-makers are a related important tool.



Excursions to cities and regions contribute to a better understanding of local contexts.

→ **Invest in the professionalisation of international culture project management frameworks and skills like competences for co-creation.** Involve those responsible for international cultural relations in exchange platforms. Develop international training formats for your staff and the next generation of international connectors. Fellow-programmes provide the establishment of lasting international learning.

Partners for engaging together in empowerment for cooperation

We list a range of organisations and other partners who might be useful to involve in your activities. The following **checklist for partner identification** can help you to find those which are relevant for your international activities:

- Cultural organisations (private, public): residencies, biennials, festivals, museums, libraries, archives, capitals of culture organisations, etc.
- Cultural administration: cultural departments, cultural ministries, national cultural institutes
- Artists, curators and creative content producers
- Creative entrepreneurs and companies
- Engaged individuals and involved staff
- Local and international NGOs
- Networks of all kinds of stakeholders: public, private members, sectoral approaches, etc.
- Communities and their organisations
- Expats, diasporas and their organisations
- Formal and informal education, research institutions as well as other knowledge owners
- Funding programme owners: international, national, public, private
- Training programme owners: academic, formal, informal
- Information sources owners
- Media, publishing houses and database owners: local, national, international, grassroot, professional

- International organisations and transnational secretariats
- Decisionmakers and politicians
- Other

3 main recommendations related to the additional potential of capitals of culture

Major events like Capitals of Culture or other longer-term endeavours related to cultural development have additional opportunities to invest in the empowerment of professionals and audiences for international cultural cooperation. We would like to draw your attention to 3 key areas:

- **Develop multi-annual training and empowerment programmes for local professionals and populations to facilitate international and intercontinental cultural cooperation.** Fellow programmes could be part of the legacy activities of Capitals of Culture.
- **Ensure that peer-learning opportunities are available and supported for their operational implementation.** This approach could also include international excursion for peer-exchanges organized in the framework of Capitals of Culture.
- **Engage with decision-makers to explore options for the sustaining of intercontinental dialogues of competences** to improve and modernise international cultural relations on local and city level as well as on other governance levels based on international cooperation.



Inspiring Good Practices

This chapter is dedicated to 15 inspiring practices from four different continents. We present objectives and activities as well as lessons learned from a wide variety of projects with considerable international dimensions. All are linked to the five main areas of attention and action. Many practices address a wide range of different topics related to better cooperation. These practices were collected in the framework of the DECONFINING project aiming at improving the EU/rope and Africa relations.



01

14th Kaunas Biennial “Long- Distance Friendships” (2023)

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

Kaunas Biennial is the largest, longest lasting, most significant and most visited contemporary art festival in Lithuania and the Baltic states. Its main **objectives** are:

- to reflect on local issues on a global scale in the context of a contemporary visual arts festival;
- to allow for deep human experiences about connecting elements beyond the big narratives. These encounters are mediated by the language of art;
- in 2023, the 14th edition of Kaunas Biennial was dedicated to the theme of “Long-Distance Friendships” and recalled the many connections which existed during Soviet times with the African continent.
- Related to the 14th Kaunas Biennial (2023), the following objectives were pursued:
- building a community of artists from post-Soviet and post-colonial contexts;
- allowing for common development of art works in participative settings involving local expressions and the local population;
- connecting with partners from other European countries organising art festivals with similar backgrounds including the Survival Kit Festival in Riga and the Graphic Art Biennial in Ljubljana.

The financial support of the Kaunas Biennial mainly relies on Lithuanian resources (national, city). The festival also generates income from private funds and institutional support (ca. 5%). Depending on the artists involved further support can be generated from the Goethe Institut, Ukrainian Institute, Canada Council for the Arts, etc. In addition, in 2023, a new cooperation included a female coffee entrepreneur from Ethiopia who acted as an ambassador of the festival, brew a special festival coffee brand, and was involved in the festival communication.

Kaunas Biennial has a proven set of **activities** and operational settings. For each edition, a team of curators is invited. The co-curators of the 2023 edition were Alicia Knock (Centre Pompidou France specialising in post-colonial African art) and Inga Lāce (Centre for Contemporary Art



specialising in post-Soviet artistic expressions). The curators were the masterminds to develop the concept of long-distance friendships based on the analysis that the Soviet occupation in the Baltic States and the post-colonial experiences on the African continent demonstrate many similarities.

The co-creation phase of the artists coming from both backgrounds included first a study visit for the invited artists to get to know Kaunas, to understand the context of the Biennial, to learn more about the local frameworks and cultural practices. A wide range of formats was used during these visits: workshops, encounters with local researchers, historians or guides, common dinners, and other social events. In the run up to the Biennial, those artists working on commissions for new artworks were in Kaunas for residencies of two to three weeks which included intense exchange and cooperation with local artists as well as volunteers. Some artists did also field research on local traditions and established related contacts and started partnerships (e.g. with polyphonic singing associations).

The Biennial is prepared with local care and professionalism. Around 50 people work on the installation of the exhibition for around two to three weeks. The teams include producers, project managers, technicians, volunteers, and students. Related to the students, the Biennial has fully operational cooperations with a wide range of universities and study subjects in Kaunas. This also reflects the situation that around 30% of the local population are students.

For the 2023 edition, the exhibitions did not only take place in Kaunas but also in Riga (Latvia) and Ljubljana (Slovenia). Both were first time cooperations and especially with the Survival Kit Festival in Riga a lot of similarities were discovered (post-Soviet, Baltic States, etc.). The festival in Ljubljana was different from the specific sectors addressed as it focused on graphic art.

Future plans based on the results of the 14th Kaunas Biennial are mainly related to follow-up activities of some of the artists involved. The artist from Cameroon Jeanne Kamptchouang aims at continuing with a second residency in Kaunas to further exchange on common textile traditions and to develop related artworks. The “School of Mutants” prepares a performing arts piece with the Kaunas National Drama Theatre in the context of the Deconfining project.

Ownership(s)

Organisers

→ Kaunas Biennial ↗

Curators

→ Alicia Knock and Inga Lāce

Artists

→ Georges Adéagbo, Andrius Arutiunian ↗, Judy Blum Reddy ↗, Ihosvanny Angel, Andro Eradze, Ângela Ferreira ↗, François-Xavier Gbré ↗, Šejla Kamerić ↗, Jeanne Kamptchouang ↗, Admire Kamudzengerere, Nikolay Karabinovych ↗, Mohammad Omar Khalil, Nino Kvrivishvili, Žilvinas Landzbergas, Ibrahim Mahama, Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien ↗, Ieva Martinaitytė-Mediolia, Jaanus Samma ↗, The School of Mutants (Hamedine Kane, Stéphane Verlet Bottéro, Valérie Osouf, Tejasweni Sonawane, Hannah Taylor, Moise Togo, Mykolas Deveikis), Anastasia Sosunova ↗, Adéla Součková ↗, Magdalena Birutė Stankūnaitė-Stankūnienė, Sumayya Vally and Moad Musbahi with Thania Petersen and Sukanta Majumdar, Kemang Wa Lehulere and Lefifi Tladi, Martin Zetová, Yonamine ↗

Partner organisations

→ Lithuanian Council for Culture ↗, Kaunas City Municipality ↗, L'Institut français de Lituanie ↗, Lithuanian Culture Institute ↗

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The 14th Kaunas Biennial on the topic of “Long-Distance Friendships” was the first-time intensive exchange with artists from the African continent which took place in post-Soviet times in Kaunas. **The post-Soviet societies are still influenced by stereotypic views**, racial and racist perceptions which was influenced by propaganda and representations in public. **It is important to break these frameworks down** and to open the eyes of broad audience about contemporary African expressions in art and beyond. Furthermore, the common consideration of post-Soviet and post-colonial frameworks allowed the local stakeholders to better connect to contemporary African and Baltic realities.



From the point of view of the artists, it was a big success as the Biennial succeeded (again) to be a platform for discovery of new talents and of new distribution channels. Together with the Lithuanian Culture Institute, Kaunas Biennial organises for each edition an **international gathering of experts**.

In 2023, museums directors, curators, gallerists, journalists, art critics and other experts from Sweden, Norway, Poland, Germany, Italy, Canada, UK, and Scotland joined to visit the Biennial and to exchange with the artists and their fellow colleagues. Their feedback was that **the 2023 edition was a real discovery of new talent for them** and that they did not know many of the post-colonial and post-Soviet artists exhibiting their artworks in Kaunas. This feedback reflects exactly the overarching objective of the Kaunas Biennial to be a platform and to support artists in their professional development.

The **combination of post-Soviet and post-colonial perspectives was an important connecting point** which allowed the artists to work on common experiences. This was also an eye-opener for the organisers and the audiences. Understanding that the **methods of oppressions which are used on all continents are the same**: bans on language and religion or cultural expressions, shortages of products and queuing for what people need for their daily lives, etc. It could be imagined that all oppressors use the same guidebook. These frameworks also **link to the war in Ukraine** which was very present for all participating in the Kaunas Biennial 2023 as the areas of this conflict are not far from Lithuania.

The **interaction with the local population** was another important lesson learned. This made a connecting point from those coming from far. The time to spend in the local context and the great many interaction formats are crucial to achieve the objective of an art festival with aims at being relevant for the local people. This needs dialogue and **dialogue needs time**. Encouraging was that many similarities were discovered in these encounters (e. g. shortages during times of oppression, textile art and production, polyphonic singing).

While **the operational work was not different for this Biennial compared to previous editions** (e. g. some difficulties in shipping artworks are a common endeavour for an art festival, visa issues were limited as many of the artists are working

and living already on many continents), the budgets available to produce artworks are still too weak. There are considerations by the Kaunas Biennial to further investigate support from private funders to allow for more decent budgets for the artists.

The wider **policy frameworks** related to intercontinental cooperation should **much more focus on education**. There are some good practice examples from initiatives in Lithuania, such as the Digital Explorers project “Female Track” that in early 2021 brought young Nigerian women to Lithuania for six-month placements at leading ICT companies. The Kaunas Medical University has a long-lasting cooperation with the Middle East. The **European Union** would have an important role to **further open the Erasmus-programmes** to allow for broad exchanges and learning. This would have two very beneficial effects: enhancing the cultural richness of those places where the exchange students go and the furthering of understanding of interconnectivity of the world within youth populations. **During Soviet times substantial exchange took place in areas like architecture, interior design, engineers, etc.** These practices could also serve as an inspiration for initiating all types of intercontinental exchange experiences.

Further Information

- [Kaunas Biennial](#) ↗
- [Alicia Knock and Inga Lāce curators of 14th Kaunas Biennial and Survival Kit festival](#) ↗
- [Artists and venues for the joint exhibition “Long-distance Friendships”](#) ↗
- [Article «Biennale de Kaunas : nostalgies africaines en Europe de l’Est»](#) ↗



02

ACP – EU Culture Program: Support for the cultural and creative sectors in West Africa – AWA

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The ACP-EU CULTURE Program: Support for the cultural and creative sectors in West Africa – AWA is implemented from December 11, 2020 to April 11, 2024 by the AWA consortium formed by the French Institute of Paris [↗](#) and of the CCK- Kôre Ségou Cultural Center [↗](#).

The “ACP-EU Culture Program: AWA (Art in West Africa)” has a dual **objective** of

- on the one hand, support the boosting of the competitiveness of cultural and creative industries (CCI) throughout the value chain and
- on the other hand, contribute to supporting the development of the digital economy in the 16 West African countries.
- **Activities:** AWA is structured around three main axes, namely
- financial support for the projects of ICC operators in West Africa (Structuring Fund for Cultural Operators and Culture Development Fund);
- the Skills Building Program through short training courses and summer universities;
- Networking through the awafrica.org platform and through major cultural events in West Africa and beyond.

AWA is an illustration of what the new EU/AU alliance could be in the spirit of a collaboration based on trust and the responsabilisation of local partners. “This is a project that has been co-constructed by the two partners in a dynamic of complementarity with the responsabilisation of the local partner for the management of the grant.”



Success Factors and Lessons Learned

AWA is a success because it is a **sub-regional system** which supports the boosting of the competitiveness of cultural and creative industries **throughout the process of the value chain** (creation, production, and dissemination) by the means of **structural financing, the development of skills and networking**, and which is largely managed by an **experienced local organization** (CCK). AWA responds to the issues facing the ICC sector in West Africa because it has been co-constructed and co-directed with local players (CCK) who have a very good understanding of the challenges and needs of the sector in West Africa.

The key elements or **points of attention** for the success of AWA are:

- The complementarity of the consortium and their knowledge of the local actors and terrain;
- The responsabilization of the **local connection point for the financing** of the beneficiaries;
- The choice of objectives with dual mechanisms: financing and capacity building. This includes determining the direction of funds, such as the Structuring Fund and the Valorization Fund for West African culture;
- The **quality of governance and coordination with the implementation bodies** (Steering Committee and Management Committee);

Future plans: The objective of future projects is to consolidate the achievements of AWA and to work towards the sustainability of cultural and creative industries in West Africa through capacity building. Through the 05 IKAMS (Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo, Mauritanie, Cote d'Ivoire) labeled within the framework of the project, which will persist in fostering and enhancing the skills of artists and cultural actors in West Africa, ensuring the sustainability of AWA.

Further Information

- The AWA Program website and platform [↗](#)
- The AWA program on the CCK- Kôrè Ségou Cultural Center Website [↗](#)
- The AWA program Facebook Page [↗](#)
- The AWA program information on LinkedIn [↗](#)



03

Arctic Arts Summit

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The Arctic Arts Summits brings together representatives of Arctic countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, United States, Canada, Greenland, Iceland) and the Indigenous Nations of the Circumpolar region. The Summit creates North-to-North opportunities, explores key questions, and advances timely discussions. Related core **objectives** are:

- The enhancing of understanding of indigenous narratives and related discourses on narratives sovereignty.
- The Summits serve to strengthen arts and culture in the North and develop circumpolar cooperation to stimulate collaboration in arts and creative industries.

The Arctic Arts Summits cover a wide range of different topics.

The Summit is a multilateral cooperation involving representatives from the 8 Arctic countries (7 without Russia from 2022 onwards due to the aggression on Ukraine). The initiative – based on a multiannual phase of organic growing and learning – is now anchored with a secretariat and as a project at the Sami Parliament in Norway. The main **activity** is a bi-annual summit comprising:

- a co-created conference programme engaging with policymakers, arts funding bodies, academics as well as artists and cultural organisations which is accessible online and on-site touring through the different Arctic countries.
- a related festival programme to experience Arctic and Indigenous arts and cultures and for artistic as well as creative production.
- master classes and other exchange of knowledge formats to strengthen the Arctic ecosystem of collaboration and culture.

The **future plans** comprise the development of a sustainable structure for the Summit.



Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The Arctic Arts Summits ambitions are far beyond an artistic and cultural network. Based on the analysis of a much too narrow-minded view on the circumpolar region of many policymakers and policy initiatives and a lack of **involving the human perspectives in future projections of the Arctic**, it aims at filling the gap of in-depth exchanges and debates between artists, policymakers, arts funders and knowledge providers. Such an objective requires an involving concept and format. If policy should change, it is crucial to involve policy- and decision-makers. This is the ambition of the summit which was already successfully implemented several times.

The structural imbalances concern on the one hand the narrow-minded views on the area as being exploitable – a territory of extraction and geopolitics – and on the other hand the ongoing deepening of action towards and with the different indigenous populations in all Arctic countries (only Iceland has no indigenous population). The programme of the **summit is co-designed and led by indigenous artists and organisations in exchange and cooperation with the wider groups of stakeholders** on the Arctic territories. By the means of these **involving and co-creative settings**, the three core target groups of the Arctic Arts Summit could be mobilised, and a very positive dynamic generated which leads now also to a further institutional anchorage and the financial engagement of new partners (e. g. including the chairmanship of the Arctic Council).

An international network aiming at a variety of target groups and improving policymaking settings requires **considerable personal engagement** as well as **stable multiannual financial support**. In the case of the Arctic Arts Summit, the initiative was initiated by a Norwegian cultural manager and with considerable financial support from the Norwegian Ministry of Culture. The funding from Norway was – at an early stage of the initiative complemented with engagement from Canada – especially the Canada Council for the Arts, co-host of the 2022 Summit with the Government of Yukon. This support was not only financial but also in view of connecting to a wide range of stakeholders participating in the conferences and

activities. Furthermore, the initiator dedicated a **lot of effort to connect** with ministries, embassies, and further strategic stakeholders in the early years of building-up and implementation.

In order to enhance opportunities for engagement, it is important to **provide a wide thematic framework** e. g. for networking and conferences. The 2022 edition of the summit covered the following themes: Land (Language, Community, Heritage, Identity), Indigenous Sovereignty (Self-determination, Indigenization and Decolonization), Climate (Environmental Sustainability, Crisis and Action), Creating (Makers, Making, and Sharing Artistic Production), Representation (Institutions & Ethics, Engagements, Education, Policy, Protocol, Repatriation), Circumpolar Collaboration (Cooperation and Mobility), Technology (Digital Arts, Data, Access, New Media), Activism (Artists, Movements and Social Change). This approach is **also especially valuable in territories which are less densely populated** and which dispose of a smaller range of institutions and local artists. The **organic growing** of the initiative was a great advantage which allowed trying out different approaches and continuously enlarging the types and numbers of partners. This way of developing was only feasible due to the financial support throughout all the years. However, being at the current stage of development and size of the initiative requires **more evolved institutional settings** which are now brought in place.

Related to external frameworks which require change, three areas of attention need to be considered. First, the **strategic documents like the EU Arctic Strategy are still too narrow in scope and miss out larger parts of the human dimensions** of the circumpolar region. Furthermore, the stop of cooperation with Russia in the Arctic context has consequences on the **Sami populations which are spread in Northern Europe and Russia**. Second, while the Arctic Arts Summit benefits now of stable frameworks in view of structures and finances, the wide range of follow-up potential generated due to the enhanced connectivity of the stakeholders in the Arctic region is **not (yet) covered by appropriate support frameworks**. E. g. follow-up research projects or artistic initiatives lack of cross-border funding instruments which are fully open for all partners from the Arctic region. This shortcoming concerns



also EU funding programmes. Third, the **mobility obstacles are considerable in the Arctic region**. For example, Inuit people from Canada and Greenland which are only based one flight hour from each other require to go for considerable trips bringing them first to Toronto, then to Denmark or Iceland and back up to Greenland. These mobility options make cooperation more expensive, more time-consuming and cause more CO₂-emissions. Furthermore, they reflect outdated colonial patterns.

Further Information

- [The 2022 Arctic Arts Summit website](#)
- [The 2019 Arctic Arts Summit website](#)
- [The 2017 Arctic Arts Summit program](#)
- [The Inuit Art Foundation website](#)

Research on the Value of Public Funding for Indigenous Arts and Cultures

The Canada Council for the Arts, in collaboration with Archipel Research and Consulting Inc., undertook a research project grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing. This research aimed to understand the role of arts and cultures to Indigenous communities across Canada and the value of public funding for Indigenous arts and cultures. [↗](#)

Inuit Futures in Arts Leadership – The Pilimmaksarniq / Pijariuqsarniq Project

The project is led by an all-Inuit team of researchers and arts practitioners from across Inuit Nunangat, and aims to support Inuit and Inuvialuit to become leaders within their communities in all areas of the arts, by providing innovative, hands-on mentoring and training opportunities across the north and south. [↗](#)



04

Book Bunk – Rewriting Colonial Libraries in Nairobi, Kenya

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

Book Bunk Trust, Nairobi was initiated in the year 2017. The founders were looking for a place to host a literature festival and considered one of the historic libraries in the city. When visiting the place, they discovered a great location, but somehow stuck in colonial times related to the interiors as well as the books present. The idea for an inclusive library and a re-appropriation of the space for contemporary uses was born.

The **objectives** of Book Bunk Nairobi are:

- the renovation of historic libraries in the City of Nairobi
- the opening of these spaces for a wide range of citizens, through library programming, with a special focus on the youth
- the updating of the libraries' collections including a focus on African literature

In March 2018, a milestone partnership with the Nairobi City County government was arrived at, which established the mandate of Book Bunk to lead the restoration of three libraries; McMillan Memorial Library, Eastlands Library and Kaloleni Library.

The work included sourcing and management of financial and in-kind support; steering architectural restoration, management of the library spaces and design & delivery of arts and skills-based programming. Following the physical restoration projects as well as public programming, two of these three libraries are now in use by the general public, serving children, youth and adults in new and enriching ways.

The initiative gained core financial support from the British Council, Sigrid Rausing Trust, among other funders.

The team of Book Bunk implements a whole range of **activities** to achieve the objectives including:

- Providing space and programmes at the three renovated libraries
- Digitalisation of the archival material in the libraries, and collection of stories to fill archival gaps- “The Missing Bits” project
- Collections management, guided by an acquisition policy
- Bunk Books – is part of the commercial universe of Book Bunk Trust, focused on the production of contemporary stories in digital and print editions combining new art and writing, for children and adults
- Green Bunk aims at building carbon-neutral libraries by 2027.

Related to the programmes a wide range of different formats are proposed – based on inquiries of the needs of the target groups:

- the NBO Litfest is a literature festival which was realised in 2021 for the first time with the objective to reimaging spaces with contested colonial and other histories, exemplified by the McMillan Memorial Library.
- Arts programmes with a special focus on youth and kids including the Art Bunk including Photography, Dance Bunk and Music Bunk. The programmes are also open to very young kids in the age of 4 to 6 years old.
- Adult porgrammes to equip library communities with essential life skills e.g. a digital literacy programme
- Screenings of movies which are child-friendly and involve the directors or actors whenever possible
- Play Bunk encourages library users to step away from their desks and play! The



Eastlands and Kaloleni libraries are fitted with several recreational activities such as LEGO Bricks, board games and more.

- Hepa Jam – opens the libraries during early evening hours so that students and learners can stay and use the spaces while waiting that the major traffic jams are over. The offer is complemented with tutorial services in the areas like Maths or Kiswahili and digital or legal advice as well as mental health support.

The permanent exchange and learning are important to the programme managers so that the programmes are coping with the needs of the target audiences.

Ownership(s)

The owners of the initiative are:

- The Book Bunk Charitable Trust ➤
- The teams and cooperation partners from the local communities in the quarters where the libraries are located.
- The co-designers of the programmes and activities and all those engaged locally and beyond in the renovation of the colonial libraries into places of encounter.

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The renovation and **further development of the libraries required the support of the Nairobi City County government** to provide Book Bunk with **an official mandate to renovate** the libraries and to provide services and programmes in the buildings.

A crucial success factor was to involve the local communities in the projects. This was done on the one hand by interacting continuously with the different target groups related to their perceptions and needs. On the other hand, the construction company in charge of doing the renovation work had to involve members of the residents in the quarter of each library. The workers got deep insight into the project and were also reassured that the works were done in high-quality providing the users with a safe space. **Furthermore, this involvement generated also interest to use the services of the libraries by the residents.** It improved local ownership.

The focus on kids and young people is another success factor. Parents like the services of the libraries and the related programmes. They know that their children are not exposed to bad influences and are confident that the children acquire new competences which can be also useful for their professional life.

Finally, the **participants in all programmes in the libraries are always served snacks and / or meals. This setting ensures that all are in good shape to learn and to improve their skills.**

The **process of renovation** was still underway when the pandemic started. This new context required some reflection and how to continue building while at the same time providing a safe space and a healthy environment. The renovations could be achieved despite these more difficult circumstances.

Book Bunk is a new endeavour and the whole team feels as being learners every day. Sometimes programmes are not reaching the expectations and then further reflection and research is taking place to modify and to improve the settings.

Furthermore, the **infrastructural frameworks are not yet perfect on all levels**, e. g. the libraries are still struggling to provide stable internet connections and to find the best provider for these services.



Libraries should not be perceived as places where you go for books only. They are open spaces for interaction, exchange, for learning and know-how-transfer. They provide rooms for events and meetings, to interact in inclusive areas. To fulfil these expectations, **the libraries needed to be modernised – also in view of the colonial aesthetics and to provide places of culture, exchange, and learning.** This philosophy is well translated by the visions of the founders ↗:

→ **Experiential:** We're working to transform what people do at the library. We believe that these spaces can continue to nurture academic and literary pursuits, while also providing a home for diverse and accessible programmes and events that are free from political or religious agenda and that celebrate art, wellbeing, and learning.

→ **Architectural:** Coordinate the physical renovation of these spaces while ensuring their historical integrity is maintained and showcased. We're also committed to ensuring the communities living around these spaces are the primary beneficiaries of each of these projects.

→ **Social:** We want to build 'Palaces for The People'; public, inclusive, and safe spaces where Nairobi's residents can access whatever they need be it legal advice, tax education, or a neutral space to commune and network. This, in a bid to explore what public space really means in this city.

→ **Digital:** We're working to introduce technology into every aspect of these libraries: access control, collections management, online catalogues as well as digital skills training for librarians and library users. We want the digital lives of these libraries to match that of the digital possibilities of Nairobi.

Further Information

- [The Book Bunk Website](#) ↗
- [The Book Bunk Projects](#) ↗ ↗ ↗
- [The Book Bunk Programmes](#) ↗ ↗
- [The Book Bunk Impact Measurement](#) ↗



05

CONIFA – The Confederation of Independent Football Associations and their Women’s World Football Cup

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The CONIFA association was established in 2013. The Confederation of Independent Football Associations is a global umbrella organization for national teams not under the auspices of FIFA – representing nations, ethnicities, minorities, isolated dependencies or cultural regions. Our main goal is to give football outsiders overseen by FIFA or left behind by their mother countries FA (football associations) the chance to win their place on a global stage and advance football-wise and personally. CONIFA aims to build bridges all over the world through friendship, culture and the joy of playing football. CONIFA is committed to fair play and the eradication of racism.

- The main **objectives** of CONIFA are:
- to provide frameworks by the means of football to generate lasting friendships between people from different cultural backgrounds and origins.
 - to allow access to information and knowledge from a wide range of backgrounds and covering the continents of Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.
 - to make visible the symbiosis with nature and to provide access to the wealth of indigenous knowledge on sustainable living.
 - to make the world better by investing in these friendships and to use football as a tool as it is the widest spread sport on the globe.

Furthermore, the Women’s World Football Cup (WWFC) was motivated by the fact that women are (still) marginalised in many societies and in football despite the advances women football has made in the recent past. CONIFA co-organised the first Women WFC in Tibet in 2022.

CONIFA is a small organisation which relied fully on volunteer engagement since 2013. The membership fees contribute to a limited extent to the NPOs finances. Granting the rights to host CONIFA tournaments helps to financially support the organisation. In general, it is a delicate balance between growing and accessing finance and still maintaining the spirit of the organisation which could be harmed by people oriented more towards benefit than the values of connecting and cultural exchange. However, the current financial situation is fragile and would benefit from some longer-term engagement from (private or public) funders. This support should allow financing 2-3 permanent staff on each continent. CONIFAs main decision body is the annual general meeting (AGM) in which the members elect a board. Each board member disposes of one vote while each Football Association member owns ten votes. These settings ensure that the members make the decisions and ensure that the ownership lays within the members.



The main **activities** are the organisation of tournaments. In 2023, the major tournaments were the CONIFA European WFC (World Football Cup) Qualifier that was played in three different locations in Europe and the first ever CONIFA Asia Cup 2023. In 2024, the WWFC (Women World Football Cup) 2024 will be played 4-8th June 2024 in Bodö, Norway with 5 women teams (FA Sapmi – Sami-Host, Székelyland, Tamil Eelam FA, Tibet National Sports Association, North Cyprus). The CONIFA WFC (Men World Football Cup) had to be postponed until 2025 due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The CONIFA WFC (World Football Cup) will hold 16 teams from all around the world, hosted by Kurdistan in 2025.

Those organisations hosting CONIFA cups are expected to organise a wide range of formats to ensure cultural exchange to cope with the CONIFA values and objectives: These can comprise cooperations with schools. Students learn about the cultural and geographic backgrounds of the teams joining a tournament (e. g. like in 2019 in Artsakh).

The team visited the schools and exchanged with the students. Others invest in exchanges with minority associations in order to honour and empower their self-esteem. Members also engage for raising funds like the team of Barawa FA. Due to some charity football matches money could be collected to nourish 60 families for one month. Other activities comprise the organisation of round table meetings between the teams to exchange and to learn from each other. These more formal settings are complemented with social programmes and common spare time activities during the tournaments.

Future plans comprise:

- the enhancement and further investment in women football including to guide, empower and to develop more women's tournaments
- the establishment of a e-sports platform with the members comprising an education section including cultural content
- the broader recognition of CONIFA as an international sport organisation e. g. by the United Nations
- Development of Youth Football activities amongst its members.

Furthermore, CONIFA aims at improving the professional development of the own structures and searches for partner(s) for sustainable finance.

Ownership(s)

The ownership lays with the members of the CONIFA association which is also ensured by the NPOS constitution. The owners are the following football clubs and associations:

Africa: Biafra FF, Kabyliya, Katanga, Yoruba

Asia: East Turkistan FA, FA West Papua, Hmong FF, Kashmir FA, Kurdistan FA, Panjab FA, Tamil Eelam FA, Tibetan NSA

Europe: Abkhazia, Artsakh, Canton Ticino, Chameria, Elba Island, Ellan Vannin, Kárpátalja, Kernow, Northern Cyprus, Padania, Raetia, Sapmi, Sardinia, South Ossetia, Székely Land, Two Sicilies, Western Armenia

North America: ANBM, Cascadia, Kiskeya FA, Kuskatan

South America: Aymara, FAD de Estado de São Paulo, Guna people, Mapuche, Maule Sur, SF Armenio Argentina

Oceania: Hawai'i

The rights to organise a CONIFA tournament like the WWFC in Bodo in 2024 are attributed by the CONIFA NPO and are based on a common understanding of values.

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The success of CONIFA and its tournaments relies on the fact that **for decennials the initiators remained engaged** and invested considerable time and financial resources to maintain the activities. The **solid constitution of the NPO** provides good ground for engagement and decision-making.

Furthermore, **football** is played on all continents and has therefore an **inherent connecting power like music**.

The engagement with and for those being part of indigenous communities and other backgrounds without access to international football is a crucial success factor. **CONIFA provides an international platform for meeting, exchange, learning and making friends for a wide range of**



excluded groups. By these means it enlarges opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding as well as for investing in the future of youth including women.

The **engagement for women football provides an opportunity to highlight new role models** and new “heroes”. This can be very beneficial on many levels: update perceptions of women in communities and groups, enhance self-esteem and recognition by peers in football and beyond as well as strengthening womens’ roles in society and in sport. CONIFA can already rely on related good reference practices.

Football is a tool that can help to connect people from different continents. **Playing together and meeting face-to-face allows for in depth exchanges and for the building of friendships.** The activities of CONIFA **widen horizons of participants and audiences beyond** the known football nations being part of the FIFA system.

Engagement is needed for more balanced access to opportunities which are not equally distributed on the different continents. Engagement is equally needed for **becoming and getting again more welcoming.** Currently the world is getting more and more closed and new “walls” are built. Re-using football and cultural exchange to connect people is crucial.

Furthermore, substantial investment in a **sustainable way of life and work** is necessary. **CONIFA connects with indigenous knowledge** to better understand the connectivity of human-beings with nature and Mother Earth.

Further Information

CONIFA Event Overview

- 2014: CONIFA World Football Cup, Sweden; AGM (Association General Meeting) in Cologne, Germany
- 2015: CONIFA European Football Cup, Hungary; AGM in Skopje, Macedonia
- 2016: CONIFA World Football Cup, Abkhazia; AGM in Bergamo, Italy
- 2017: CONIFA European Football Cup, Northern Cyprus; AGM in Geneva, Switzerland
- 2018: CONIFA World Football Cup, United Kingdom; AGM in Kyrenia, North Cyprus
- 2019: CONIFA European Football Cup, Artsakh CONIFA No Limit, Monaco; AGM in Krakow, Poland
- 2021: CONIFA No Limit Mediterranean Futsal Cup, San Remo, Italy; AGM Jersey (United Kingdom)
- 2022: CONIFA Africa Cup, Johannesburg, South Africa; CONIFA Copa America, Linares, Chile; CONIFA Women World Football Cup, Paonta Sahib, India; CONIFA Strategy Days, Sabbioneta, Italy; AGM Zoom
- 2023: CONIFA European World Football Cup Qualifier, (Switzerland, United Kingdom and Romania); CONIFA Asia Cup (Portugal); AGM in Wisconsin (USA)
- 2024: CONIFA Women World Football Cup, Bodø, Norway; AGM in Budapest, Hungary
- 2025: CONIFA World Football Cup 2025, Erbil, Kurdistan

Further information on CONIFA [↗](#)



06

Deconfining Artist Residencies in and with Capitals of Culture in Austria, Burkina Faso, Norway, and Mali

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

This Artists in Residency (AiR) programme was implemented in the framework of the EU-co-financed project “Deconfining”. It pursues the following main **objectives**:

- developing and testing new co-creation approaches for artistic and cultural exchanges between Africa and EU/rope
- enhancing the understanding of the international dimension inherent to local cultural development and intercontinental connectivity
- enriching the local cultural offer in the framework of European Capitals of Culture and African cultural initiatives by the means of intercontinentally interacting artistic creation

The AiR programme includes the following **activities**:

- A residency of an African artist in the Salzkammergut and in cooperation with a local Austrian artist and a parallel residency in Norway with an artist from Mali and a local Norwegian artist. These first residencies were dedicated to the writing of texts related to the topic of deconfining. The texts covered the perspectives from Austria, Mali, Norway, and Burkina Faso. Furthermore, artists talks as public events were organised to allow a wider exchange with the local population. A related podcast was produced and disseminated. (2022-2023)
- A second residency of a Norwegian artist at the Festival of the Niger in Mali and an Austrian artist in the Opera Village in Burkina Faso. Each of these residencies will be done cooperation with a West African artist. This second residency builds on the texts written during the first residency and will be implemented by visual artists. (2023-2024)

Future plans linked to the AiR programme are:

The results of the parallel residency programmes will be further elaborated in common performing arts pieces touring on both continents with a special ambition to reach out to the local youth (2024-2025). This will be the outcome in the context of the EU project “Deconfining”.



In addition, the writers from the first residency in Austria consider future collaborative projects. The writer from Mali is investigating opportunities to continue artistic works in residencies in northern Norway – mainly related to the topic of art and environment.

The local radio in Austria together with their local radio partners on the African continent was inspired to further develop and establish intercontinental school relations between Austrian and African partners (in this case at the Zambian-Zimbabwean border region) due to the exchanges in the framework of the AiR programme.

Ownership(s)

Organisers of the residencies

- Bad Ischl Salzkammergut 2024, European Capital of Culture (SKGT 2024), Austria ↗
- The Opera Village (Le Village Opéra), Ziniaré, Burkina Faso ↗
- Bodø 2024, European Capital of Culture, Norway ↗
- Festival sur le Niger, Ségou, Mali ↗

Involved Artists (until February 2024)

- Sidiki Yougbaré, Burkina Faso ↗
- Thiemo Strutzenberger, Austria ↗
- Ava Binta Giallo, Germany/Guinea, lives/works in Austria and São Vicente ↗
- Thierry Oussou, born in Benin, based in Amsterdam/Netherlands ↗
- Salimata Togora, Mali ↗
- Kathrine Nedrejord, Norway ↗

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

In Austria and Burkina Faso, the AiR is based on a longer-term cooperation between the European Capital of Culture Bad Ischl Salzkammergut 2024 (Austria) and the Opera Village in Burkina Faso. This cooperation was reinforced in the framework of the Creative Europe project “Deconfining”. In Mali and Norway, the AiR is based on a newly established cooperation and could not be built on pre-existing intercontinental projects. The contact to the “Festival sur le Niger” was established by the Deconfining project. Especially the **artists talks** organised during the residencies were crucial for **further mobilising local cultural operators** and enhanced their motivation for cooperation between continents.

The first experiences in the residencies have demonstrated that concrete possibilities of artistic encounters provide very **intense exchange possibilities** and fruitful (common) artistic production. In this case, the **bilateral intercontinental cooperation of artists** was a real success factor. However, it needs to be ensured that no linguistic barriers prevent from this intensive exchange. In the case of the residency in Bodø, it was ensured that the local Norwegian artist was also a fluent French speaker.

The operational settings of the AiR could be adapted to the specific needs for welcoming artists from the African continent in the framework of a European Capital of Culture and to **address substantial imbalances and decent frameworks related to the contexts of artistic mobility**: First fee payments upon arrival of the artists are a crucial success factor as intercontinental bank transfers are costly and credit cards might not work. In the case of Bodø this issue was addressed with providing a city centre debit card filled with the whole amount of the per diem support. Furthermore, there needs to be careful attention to potential linguistic barriers (e. g. in this case providing French-German translation) and to the integration of the incoming artists in local (cultural) networks. The City Centre association in has a city centre debit card for the whole amount of per diem support.

The **careful planning of a local hospitality programme** should gain more attention. It also provides an occasion to reinforce ties with other local (and beyond) stakeholders already active in



international (cultural) cooperation (community building) and to benefit of communication occasions on international topics with local media. In this case, the cooperation with the local free radio B138 was especially fruitful.

The participation in local calls raises a considerable number of **questions on what is local and where to draw or not to draw (new) borders**. The project owners from Austria and Burkina Faso discussed this issue and decided to open-up the requirement of “local”. This led to the fact that artists could also participate who are from the wider geographical context (whole of Austria or whole of Western Africa).

The main selection criteria were then focused on the content-relation with the topic of (e. g. spatial) deconfining. On the Bodø-side, the geographic area from which artists were invited to participate was extended to the whole Northern Norwegian region. The wider context to understand this choice is related to the fact that the whole area is perceived of being periphery. Together with the Festival sur le Niger it was decided that the artists should be able to connect to the festival and to the wider region of Ségou.

The **visa processes** require a considerable amount of time of which the SKGT and Bodø European Capital of Culture 2024 were aware. However, a **simplification of the processes** would be most welcome. These improved visa frameworks are **a competence of the national ministries**.

The **establishment of decent intercontinental financial flows** like full access to debit and credit cards would be most helpful and should be investigated for cultural exchange activities. This might be also **an option for related public-private engagement** as it requires the cooperation with banks.

The **instable political context in Western Africa generates an additional obstacle** for a cultural exchange. Both cooperation partners have agreed to implement the second residency also on the European continent in case of local security issues in Burkina Faso and/or Mali. This is also in line with current recommendations from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

Further Information

- [The Deconfining project](#) ↗
- [The Intercontinental Fine Arts Residency call](#) ↗
- [Texts and podcasts from the Deconfining Residencies](#) ↗ ↗



07

Deconfining Dialogues of Competences

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

Deconfining – a 4-years EU project – aims at enhancing the international cultural exchange between cities and regions which implement(ed) Capitals of Culture or similar initiatives. The project has a special focus on Africa and EU/rope. By the means of cultural and artistic exchange as well as updated policies, different confined attitudes and stereotypes should be overcome.

The Dialogues of Competences are the Peer Exchange Programmes of the project bringing together stakeholders and good practice owners from both continents in a participative setting honouring the competences of all participants. Furthermore, it provides insight into some selected inspiring practices from other geographic areas like the Arctic Circle, East Asia, and Northern America.

Objectives: The DECONFINING – Dialogues of Competences aimed at allowing for conversations on connecting initiatives with a focus on experiences from the African continent as well as from EU/rope and wider intercontinental backgrounds. The objective was to learn from each other from concrete implementation projects and by that means show the wealth of good practices on different continents as well as improve local-to-local intercontinental cooperation.

Activities: The first Dialogue of Competences was dedicated to the growing number of local art and culture initiatives aiming at addressing colonial pasts from a wider range of angles. We aim at bringing together First Nations and Inuit,

Canadian, East, and South African as well as Northern European perspectives. The projects were presented, and the online audience was invited to join the debates and to share own experiences. The results of the dialogues have fed the content of this publication. Two conversations took place during this first Dialogue of Competences: Conversation One – Local Colonial History Perspectives in Central Europe and Africa and Conversation Two – Local-to-Local First Nations and Inuit Artistic Exchange and Cooperation in the Arctic. The first dialogue took place online in November 2023.

The second Dialogue of Competences focussed on the project Radio Transfer which builds on a lasting cooperation between community radio stakeholders in Zambia, Austria, Zimbabwe, and Germany. Radio makers from the different countries highlighted their way of cooperation and how they engage to involve local communities and residents in intercontinental activities. The conversations were completed with broader insights and lessons learned from the Deconfining project related to knowledge generation and strategic cooperation in the field of intercontinental cooperation. The special role Capitals of Culture and other emblematic culture development initiative can have to build international media partnerships was further highlighted. This second dialogue took place in March 2024 as a hybrid event, online and in Bad Ischl, Austria.

The third Dialogue of Competences was dedicated to the overall discussion of outcomes of the Deconfining Dialogue of Competences and served as a framework to present the toolkit to a wide audience. This third dialogue took place in Bodø in June 2024.

Between and after the Dialogue of Competences, a series of informal gatherings took place – the so-called Informal Intercontinental Online Coffee Chats. These started in September 2023 with a first test format which was well-accepted by the target audience. The main topics addressed were plans related to new platforms for better access to funding and to mobility and related research results on the African continent.

A second online chat took place in January 2024 comprising the topics of informal networks in the context of the European Capitals of Culture, the current plans of the pan-African network Arterial with an intervention of the new Arterial



president as well as deeper insights in advanced communication efforts on by the Black Academy operating in Benin and Germany (the Africa Calendar 2024).

The third Informal Intercontinental Online Coffee Chat was organised in April 2024. The focus was on a first exchange of the overall lessons learned as summarized in this ARNIE-Handbook.

Future Plans: Deconfining as a project without permanent structures might not be able to continue the Dialogues of Competences but aims at spreading the experience as far as possible as an inspiration for other project promoters and stakeholders active in intercontinental cooperation efforts. It also aims contributing to the modernisation of training practices in the sense of recognising a wide range of knowledge types and providers. Sylvia Amann plans to continue the informal intercontinental online activities as the chats are a simple format to keep intercontinental exchanges running. Furthermore, the outcomes of the Dialogues of Competences will feed activities in Bad Ischl Salzkammergut 2024 as well as in Bodø 2024 – European Capitals of Culture – in autumn 2024.

Ownership(s)

The project partners

- Bodø 2024, European Capital of Culture, Norway ↗
- Bad Ischl Salzkammergut 2024, European Capital of Culture (SKGT 2024), Austria ↗
- Sylvia Amann, Inforelais ↗ designed the format of Dialogues of Competences based on inspirations from a series of interviews on the African and European continents and in close cooperation with the European Capitals of Culture 2024 in Austria and Norway. Kane Limam Monza ↗, former president of the Arterial network and cultural entrepreneur in Mauretania had inspired the title of the event series during an interview in 2022.

The speakers at the Dialogues of Competences and Informal Intercontinental Coffee Chats

Speakers from the following organisations did contribute to the series of dialogue events: Book Bunk Kenya; Women's History Museum Zambia; Kaunas Biennial: Long-Distance Friendships and Vilnius University, Lithuania; Arctic Arts Summit, Norway, Canada Council for the arts, Canada; inforelais, Austria; Freies Radio B138, Austria; Binga School, Zambia; Radio Transfer – Communities in Dialogue, Germany; Bodø 2024 – European Capital of Culture, Norway; Bad Ischl Salzkammergut 2024, European Capital of Culture, Austria; Culture Funding Watch, Tunisia; on-the-move.org, Europe; Opera Village, Burkina Faso; Veszprem-Balaton 2023 – European Capital of Culture, Hungary and Europe; Arterial Network, Mali and Africa; Black Academy operating in Germany and Benin;

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The Dialogues of Competences (DoCs) provide deep insight into inspiring practices from the African, the European continent and from some international partners. The format connects good practice owners in the sense of a peer exchange which is open to a wider intercontinental audience.

The planning of such events – if not organised in the context of the work for an intercontinental good practices collection as it was the case for the Deconfining project – is very time-consuming. It requires research first. In the context of Deconfining, a series of interviews with practice owners were done in order to identify the key areas of potential common interest.

During the first DoC, two panels were organised covering three continents. This was a very ambitious format needing considerable organisational work. The audience of the first DoC did not participate very actively in the debates, but those intervening were closely linked to the topic of the “difficult past” – the priority topic of the exchange – and how local initiatives can tackle these issues by the means of participative settings.

The second Dialogue of Competences was the occasion to try out a hybrid format in Austria cooperating closely with a local radio



doing intercontinental cooperation. The cooperation with local stakeholders is of clear added value as a range of complementing contacts and speakers in Europe and Africa could be mobilised. Furthermore, the international communities on both continents did participate at this hybrid exchange event too. However, the mobilisation of local people and further initiatives would need more time and connecting actions.

The topic of Africa seems, for larger crowds, quite “far away” (e. g. geographically, potential for cooperation) and the visibility of existing initiatives providing links between both continents is very limited. Local media have a bad uptake of these projects and most are not connected to each other. In order to reach broader connectivity with the local ecosystems, a cooperation with e. g. the integration of exchange activities into local radio programmes could be a promising way forward.

Lessons learned regarding the Dialogues of Competences: Keep it simple in the sense of rather organising one panel of peers at once. Invest more time in local community building including the involvement of the diasporas. Link to existing (local and international) initiatives like good practices in a certain field of action or e. g. to the networks in the framework of European Capitals of Culture. Be clear about the key objectives – an exchange of experts or the involvement of large local crowds. Allow for people to get to know each other – by the means of presentation rounds, the organisations of break-out rooms for more direct and personal exchange or further explore the format of informal coffee chats (see below). Develop activating moments to prevent from “black screen” during online events with larger crowds in which people tend to listen only – especially in the post-pandemic period.

The Informal Intercontinental Coffee Chats is an easy-going format – based on an overall database of around 200-300 contacts. At each session, around 15 participants more less equally distributed on the two continents – Europe and Africa could be mobilised. The success is linked to the flexibility of the format and the continuity. If participants have new outputs, events to promote, research to be discussed, and many other areas of exchange, the format allows for a flexible intervention and to get feedback or additional input from peers. The Chats are interesting for participants beyond the Deconfining project

partnership organisations and new contacts were actively involved. Participants used – in addition – the Zoom-Chat function to make direct intercontinental contacts.

Lessons learned related to the Coffee Chats:

The format requires a certain investment of time to build up the networks of contact. To remain interesting for the audience, it needs a permanent update and enlargement of contacts. No further costs are implied except some working time and the fee for a Zoom account. While the format is open, the planning of some interventions makes it easier for participants to connect. The Coffee Chats provide a framework where people and initiatives from different continents can be briefly presented and get to know each other. Furthermore, the series of informal online chats across continents allow for staying connected and to keep the topic of intercontinental cooperation being still on the table of all the invited guest – even when they not participate each time. The meeting around lunch time has proven to be effective as the exchange does not interfere in other professional and private obligations during the day.

Further Information

- [The Deconfining project ↗](#)
- [Programme announcement of the second Dialogue of Competences ↗](#)



08

The Monthly European Capital of Culture (ECoC) International Meeting

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The Monthly ECoC International Meeting was initiated in the years 2021-2022 with the aim to complement the regular gatherings of the CEOs and Programme Directors of the European Capitals of Culture by an informal format of networking and exchange between all those in charge of international relations in European Capitals of Culture. The meetings began finally in April 2022 and take place as from that point on monthly basis online. This diverse crowds of employees comprises mostly international relations managers, but in some cases also protocol-related staff and cabinets as well as those in charge of international communication about the European Capitals of Culture.

- The main **objectives** of the initiative are:
- providing a framework for spreading information about ongoing activities and open calls
- enabling exchange of experiences in a range of topics considering ECoCs with a special focus on the more experienced teams and the newcomers of recently selected European Capitals of Culture
- investing in networking to ease cooperation and to provide easy access to each other.

The network is informal without specific (legal) structures and disposes of no additional funding. The participants invest their working time which is financed by each participating ECoC.

Activities: The Monthly ECoC International Meetings are implemented as online gatherings on Zoom. The chairing of the sessions including facilitation is organised in a rotation principle and in alphabetical order. The topics are gathered in a friendly crowdfunding type of action with a great openness and respect for each other's interest to share information and to listen to the colleagues.

A typical meeting contains the following elements:

- an update on ongoing activities in all the participating European Capitals of Culture. This is implemented as a tour de table.
- information on open calls for projects and related experiences (selection criteria, selection panels, etc.) as well as participation opportunities
- exchange on experiences with international partners e. g. the EU-Japan-Fest or recommendations for further international partnerships like with EUNIC as well as answering of questions, tips and ideas to solve challenges
- presentation of international projects in the European Capitals of Culture and related deliberations and feedbacks
- invitations to meetings and conferences as well as the reciprocal visits in European Capitals of Culture

Next to the Zoom meetings the network has a Google Drive where agenda's, open calls, documents of ECoC family meetings, a database with over 200 e-mail addresses from 45 different ECoCs



are available. All the active members, mentioned under question 3. have access to this platform.

Future plans comprise the elaboration of a guide-book how to best organise and manage these informal internal gatherings. Furthermore, some reflexions are popping-up to further structure or formalise the cooperation by the means of common (EU-)projects. Also, funds just for the ECOC International Meeting as capacity building financial support would be a great opportunity to strengthen the ties between active ECOCs. However, a network of candidate cities of ECOCs exists with the Culture Next initiative which is already financed by the means of EU funds.

Ownership(s)

Initiator

The Monthly ECOC International Meeting was initiated by Veszprem 2023 – European Capital of Culture – International Relations Manager, Julia Bucz and is co-owned by the selected and implementing European Capitals of Culture as well as those ECOCs being in the legacy phase and still active in the informal network.

Participants

In 2023, the following European Capitals of Culture did partake in the network:

- Esch 2022 [↗](#)
- Novi Sad 2022 [↗](#)
- Elefsina 2023 [↗](#)
- Timisoara 2023 – Centrul de Proiecte Timișoara – Finanțări nerambursabile [↗](#)
- Veszprem Balaton 2023 [↗](#)
- Salzkammergut 2024 [↗](#)
- Bodo 2024 [↗](#)
- Tartu 2024 [↗](#)
- Chemnitz 2025 [↗](#)
- Nova Gorica 2025 [↗](#)
- Trencin 2026 [↗](#)
- Oulu 2026 [↗](#)
- Evora 2027 [↗](#)
- Liepaja 2027 [↗](#)
- Budweis 2028 [↗](#)

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

One of the key success factors of the initiative is the **regularity of the meetings**. The monthly gathering became rapidly a routine for the internationalisation teams in the European Capitals of Culture. The **meetings are planned for the whole year** which provides a stable framework despite the informal nature of the network.

Furthermore, the Monthly ECOC (European Capital of Culture) International Meeting is a **low threshold initiative. It allows newcomers to ask all kinds of questions** and to rapidly enlarge their network of personal contacts in European Capitals of Culture. This is an excellent approach to motivate people to dedicate their working time and to join as it helps the participants to save considerable amounts of time when implementing their (cooperation) projects.

This network **allows for rapid and targeted information updates** from the wealth of activities in the ongoing European Capitals of Culture (selected, implementing). The information overload which is received every day in the mailboxes is channelised with these meetings. The short updates allow for rapidly catching up with the main information need and/or of added value for the own work.

The **involvement of people from a network on operational level** complementing the CEOs and programme managers who have more occasions to meet personally during ECOC fora and ECOC family meetings. To date such networks inside ECOCs were already organised for those in charge of actions with volunteers. The network of internationalisation staff in ECOCs is now already operational for several years. **Another network might be initiated soon for the questions related to sustainability.** It is crucial to allow the “normal” staff of the ECOCs to network you. This enhances the European and international dimension of the initiative, and it comprises a considerable amount of reciprocal (operational) learning. The further networking with big European cultural networks could further enhance the learning. **The network has already invited guest speakers for special topics of common interest.**

The structural settings in ECOCs related to international outreach and exchange are quite



diverse. Some ECOCs have established a **more strategic international activity which is closely linked to the programme directors and CEOs**. This approach is of considerable added value as it allows for more targeted action, **better strategic information flows (incoming and outgoing) as well as for faster decision making**. The latter is especially important for international cooperation and to cope best with related opportunities (e. g. for common actions on EU or international level).

With a wider perspective and the understanding of the considerable added value of these networks, it would be **desirable to also consider physical meetings**. The online exchange provides a lot of insights. Despite this fact, meetings between those in charge of internationalisation in European Capitals of Culture could considerably enhance exchange of **experiences and learning**. This would be especially true if international projects could be visited and related events attended together. **A special funding from the EU for this type of activities** would be very helpful (e. g. as special ECOC calls in the Creative Europe Programme or as a separate annual funding envelop).

Further Information

This informal network has no specific website and does no specific communication activities. The results of the exchanges are integral part of the ECOC projects to which the experiences of the participants have contributed.



EU–Japan Fest Japan Committee

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee is a non-governmental organisation which was established in 1992. The European Capital of Culture Antwerp 1993 was the occasion for a request by the government of Belgium for Japanese participation in the events of that year, and EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee was formed with the support of prominent members of the business community and EU member country ambassadors to Japan. The overarching **objective** of the initiative is:

- To support the transnational activities of community members and artists involved in service of regional communities and social responsibility and to contribute to the development of healthy global societies.

The EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee acts as a platform for exchange and as a funder for art and culture activities between European Capitals of Culture and their cultural communities and artists involved in the ECOC programme on the one side. On the other side, the initiative connects to artists and cultural expressions from Japan interested to cooperate with Europe and to engage with the European Capitals of Culture programmes.

The funding of the NGO is to 100% based on private fundraising. The initiative receives no public support.

The EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee is a non-governmental organisation with a secretariat led by a general secretary and with a board and a chairman. The chairman rotates every year, and is selected each time from among the vice-presidents of the Japan Business Federation. His main responsibility is fundraising for the EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee to ensure sound financial and operational frameworks of the NGO.

The **activities** of the EU-Japan-Fest Japan Committee comprise:

- a range of funding and support programmes: Mobility Support Program
 - Until 2023 were two mobility support schemes, Research Travel Grant Projects and the Passport Programme, but from 2024 they are merged into one to provide a wider range of support. The EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee expects that these EU-Japan travel and face-to-face meetings will provide an opportunity to build a sustainable network.
- For example, artists and art and culture professionals will visit each other to experience local festivals, performances, and programs; and to engage in dialogue with various people. EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee hope that this will lead to concrete proposals for further projects and the creation of sustainable network. Project support is mainly targeted to selected European Capitals of Culture. To a minor extent, past or future ECOCs can also benefit from the project support programme.
- acting as a platform and network: “Meet up ECOC” is a database of Japanese artists which allows access to a wide range of performers and cultural expressions including contact data and other presentation material. The secretariat also implements intensive connecting initiatives by visiting all ECOCs personally and initiating the direct cooperation with the ECOC organising institutions and by inviting the ECOC stakeholders to Japan and other events for networking and further developing the initiative.



Ownership(s)

→ [EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee](#) ↗

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The EU-Japan Fest Japan Committee carefully puts people and dialogue at the centre of all efforts to connect and to provide new opportunities. It is important to understand that **dialogue is fundamental to develop first a relationship and then to build on artistic and cultural projects**. In this sense, it is also **impossible to immediately judge on a quality of a cooperation**. The important element is to let the relationships evolve. From the experience of the past 30 years, **many European Capitals of Culture of the past continue substantial programmes with Japanese artists and Japanese cultural expressions**.

International (cultural) cooperation and European Capitals of Culture are long-term endeavours. It is **crucial to connect people at grassroots level in order to enhance the understanding of global connectivity**. Local cultural development as promoted by the **European Capitals of Culture provides a framework for developing these connections in the long run**. Furthermore, art and culture work globally. This can be seen from many examples which last already for decennials like the Far East Film Festival in Udine (Italy) involving a wide range of Japanese film directors. **These platforms and networks providing (financial) support and occasions to dialogue are needed to weave the ties between people**, to allow to meet and to develop sustainable connections. **The more dots are connected, the better can develop global relations**.

Further Information

- [The EU-Japan-Fest Japan Committee website](#) ↗
- [The EU-Japan-Fest Japan Committee support programmes](#) ↗
- [The database of supported projects](#) ↗
- [The database of Japanese artists and international artists based in Japan](#) ↗



10

The Kôrè Institute of Arts and Crafts of Ségou (IKAM) and its subsidiaries in Africa

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The Institut Kôrè des Arts et Métiers (IKAM) in Ségou, Mali, is based on the successful experience and success of the entrepreneurial model of the Festival sur le Niger in Ségou, called Maaya entrepreneurship. Its vision is to promote and develop the arts and cultural professions in Africa inspiring from rich African heritage.

Specializing in training in cultural management and entrepreneurship, IKAM is a key resource for issues relating to cultural structuring and management in the cultural and creative industries. It is also a benchmark for introductory and advanced training in innovative trades (sound, lighting, stage management).

Objectives: The Kôrè Institute of Arts and Crafts aims to train a new elite of African cultural entrepreneurs. To this end, it offers a Master program in Cultural Management, a Professional License in Cultural Engineering as well as continuing education. The IKAM constitutes a centre of resources for questions of professional orientation, specialization and more generally on everything concerning organization and management in the field of cultural entrepreneurship. It also serves as a cultural enterprise incubator.

Activities: IKAM operates in the field of training through continuing education, a Master in Cultural Management, a Professional License in Cultural Engineering, etc. It also maintains a framework of communitary collaboration with its subsidiaries (IKAM Burkina Faso, Togo, Ivory Coast, Mauritania) in connection with the IKAM Standards Reference and the charter of Maaya Entrepreneurs and the IKAM Community. IKAM is also a specialist in the organization of Bootcamps. We also offer a cultural enterprise incubator program “Kore Quality” with a dual mechanism of financing and training. Through all its boot camps and trainings, IKAM Ségou has trained more than 500 professionals in the last 3 years.

IKAM serves as an illustration of the positive relationship between the AU/EU, as it possesses an Educational Committee, a teaching staff, comprising both African and European experts. The institute also has a young and dynamic Executive Team which ensures the daily implementation of its activities.



Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The range of success factors and lessons learned comprise:

- **IKAM responds to the lack of adequate training structures adapted to local African realities.**
- **IKAM's teaching is based on an endogenous model**, as well as a Western model of Enterprise management: Maaya Cultural Entrepreneurship (ECM).
- **The diversity and quality of the teaching staff and the pedagogical committee**, composed of both Africans and Europeans.
- **IKAM cultivates links of partnership and co-creation** for artists, cultural actors, cultural entrepreneurs, women leaders, local populations. Not only with its subsidiaries, but also with other organizations, both in Africa (such as Uganda, Nigeria, Cameroon, etc.) and elsewhere (such as Indonesia, The Netherlands and Germany).
- The originality of the approach which **combines the general concepts of entrepreneurship in the West with local values** (Maaya values).

Future Plans: IKAM's future projects are the launch of the Professional Degree in Cultural Engineering. The expansion of its Community Development department through Social Art for Social Change, the labelling of new subsidiaries (Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, etc.), the intention of cooperation with the University of Hildesheim in Germany, Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam through the Master Lumbung practice and the strengthening of cooperation with Gudskul – Contemporary Art Collective and Ecosystem Studies in Jakarta (Indonesia).

Ownership

The Kôre Institute of Arts and Crafts (IKAM) of Ségou in Mali, created in September 2013 by Mr. Mamou Daffé and his team, is a unique higher education institute in West Africa which trains in cultural management and cultural entrepreneurship following an educational concept based on the social and solidarity values of the people of Mali and adapted to the emergence of cultural and creative industries. It currently has four subsidiaries in Africa (Togo, Burkina Faso, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritania). It is a member of the Kôre Art & Culture Group (GKAC), which also includes the "Festival sur le Niger Foundation" and the "Kôre Cultural Center".

Further Information

- [IKAM Mali](#)
- [The IKAM Facebook page](#)
- [Maaya Cultural Entrepreneurship](#)
- [The DOEN Foundation](#)
- [Groupe Kôre Art & Culture \(GKAC\)](#) - GKAC is a cultural consortium composed by Fondation Festival sur le Niger, Centre Culturel Kôre and Institut Kôre des Arts et Métier (IKAM) in order to encourage synergy and mutualization.
- [Gudskul - Contemporary Art Collective and Ecosystem Studies in Jakarta \(Indonesia\)](#)
- [IKAM of Togo](#)
- [IKAM Burkina Faso](#)
- [IKAM Congo/Brazzaville](#)
- [IKAM Mauretania](#)



11

TheMuseumsLab

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

Objectives

TheMuseumsLab is

- a collaborative project designed to offer a platform for joint learning, perspective exchange, networking, and career development among African and European museum professionals. Its primary objective is to facilitate connections that bridge individuals, institutions, and nations across two continents, fostering engaged discussions on how museums can confront their colonial past, meet the present societal, global challenges and work together to actively shape a more equitable future.
- a platform for shared expertise and perspectives, TheMuseumsLab aiming to build strong and lasting networks to contribute to the transformation of museums. Selected fellows for each edition of the programme benefit of intercontinental exchange as well as of follow-up alumni frameworks.
- an intercontinental cooperation to foster social change by addressing urgent issues such as global equality, social justice and climate change. A wide range of topics is tackled during the exchanges.

The programme is funded by the German Ministry for Culture and the Media and the German Federal Foreign Office.

Activities: TheMuseumsLab started in the year 2021 with its first edition and to date (October 2023) has finalised three full programmes. In the programme years 2021 to 2023, 145 Fellows representing museums and cultural institutions from 21 African and 15 European countries participated.

TheMuseumsLab comprises three Modules, taking place online and on-site in Africa and Europe. Furthermore, each Fellow participates in a one-week Residency in one of the African or European TheMuseumsLab Residency Museum. The residencies take place in one of the partner museums of the network. To date 52 museums on both continents joined the initiative. The residencies are implemented in tandems involving a participant from Africa and one from Europe.

A total of 50 fellows all with a strong relation to museums and many on their way to get leading positions in their institutions participates in each of the editions. 25 of the fellows are from Africa and 25 from European museums. The network of alumni is constantly growing and comprises so far around 150 participants from both continents.

Ownership(s)

Founding partners

TheMuseumsLab [↗](#) was jointly developed by four Founding Partners:

- the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) [↗](#)
- the Museum für Naturkunde – Leibniz Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity Science (MfN) [↗](#)
- the Master's Programme in Museum Management and Communication at the University of Applied Sciences Berlin (HTW) [↗](#)
- and the African consultancy group The Advisors [↗](#)

The programme curation process has evolved throughout the first three years of the programme. In the current approach, an African and a European museum collaborate to implement a programme lasting from May to November. Museum für Naturkunde Berlin fills that part on the European site, while the African Partner Museum rotates throughout the years (2022: University of the Western Cape, District Six Museum, South Africa; 2023: National Museums of Kenya, University of Nairobi, Kenya; 2024: Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, Ghana)

The project is monitored by a strategic Steering Board, which is responsible for directional decisions regarding the project. This Board includes representatives of TheMuseumsLab



Alumni, an international Academic committee, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, DAAD and the annual African partner museum

The Museum für Naturkunde acts as programme coordinator.

Residency museums

The following museums act as residency museums (in alphabetical order):

→ Africa Museum, RMCA – Royal Museum for Central Africa | Tervuren, Belgium; Amgueddfa Cymru — National Museum Wales | Wales, United Kingdom; Anno Museum, department: The Glomdal Museum | Elverum, Norway; Deichtorhallen, Internationale Kunst und Fotografie Hamburg | Germany; Deutsche Bahn Stiftung gGmbH – DB Museum | Germany; Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum | Germany; Deutsches Hygiene-Museum Dresden | Germany; Deutsches Museum | Munich, Germany; Egyptian Museum and Papyruscollection, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SPK) | Berlin, Germany; Ethnologisches Museum und Museum für Asiatische Kunst, SMB, SPK | Berlin, Germany; Freedom Park – Heritage Site & Museum | Pretoria, South Africa; Guest Artists Space Foundation (G.A.S. Foundation) | Lagos, Nigeria; Germanisches Nationalmuseum | Nuremberg, Germany; Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) | Accra, Ghana; Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie für Gegenwart | Berlin, Germany; Hamburger Kunsthalle | Germany; HKW – Haus der Kulturen der Welt | Berlin, Germany; The Iziko South African Museum | Cape Town, South Africa; Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) | Cape Town, South Africa; Leibniz Institute for the Analysis of Biodiversity Change | Hamburg / Bonn, Germany; LEIZA – Leibniz-Zentrum für Archäologie | Mainz, Germany; Linden-Museum, Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde | Stuttgart, Germany; Luthuli Museum | KwaDukuza, South Africa; die LÜBECKER MUSEEN | Hansestadt Lübeck, Germany; Manchester Museum, The University of Manchester | United Kingdom; MARKK – Museum am Rothenbaum, Kulturen und Künste der Welt | Hamburg, Germany; Musée des Confluences | Lyon, France ; Museu de Lisboa | Lisbon, Portugal ; Museums Association of Namibia | Windhoek, Namibia; Museum Fünf Kontinente

| Munich, Germany; Museum für Angewandte Kunst | Frankfurt a.M., Germany; Museum für Naturkunde Berlin – Leibniz Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity Science | Germany; Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge | United Kingdom; National Museum of Namibia | Namibia; National Museum of World Cultures | Rotterdam, Netherlands; National Museums of world culture, Världskultur Museerna | Gothenburg, Sweden; Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, cultures of the World | Cologne, Germany; Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen Mannheim | Germany; Robben Island (Mayibuye Archives & Museum) | Cape Town, South Africa; South African National Parks (SAN Parks) – Mapungubwe Pretoria & Limpopo | Pretoria, South Africa; SAVVY Contemporary – The Laboratory of Form-Ideas | Berlin, Germany; Senckenberg Natural History Museum Frankfurt | Germany; Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (SKD) / GRASSI Museum | Germany; Städel Museum | Frankfurt a.M., Germany; Stiftung Stadtmuseum | Berlin, Germany; Swiss National Museum | Zurich, Switzerland; TM³ – Tsumeb Mineralogic & Mining; Museum | Tsumeb, Namibia; Uganda National Museum | Ministry of Tourism Wildlife and Antiquities | Kampala, Uganda; The Warburg Institute, University of London, School of Advanced Study | London, United Kingdom; Weltkulturen Museum Frankfurt | Germany; Weltmuseum Wien – KHM-Museumsverband | Vienna, Austria; ZKM – Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe | Germany



Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The success factors of TheMuseumsLab are the **building on strong project partners**. The initiative can rely on a broad network of museums being most often **institutions with considerable backing in national and local cultural policies** and ecosystems. Furthermore, the start during the pandemic and in crisis-mode which was first perceived as a serious obstacle have proven to be a glue for the initial partnership. As the programme could be even started during these crisis-times, there is a strong common belief to be able to achieve the self-set objectives and a **considerable will and motivation to continue to cooperate**. In addition, the **project teams perceive their work as a permanent learning experience** and prototyping. This attitude aims also at **institutional change of a museum as learning institutions**.

Main lessons learned concern the **diverse institutional backgrounds** and related challenges. While a network functions very flexible and in permanent development due to exchange and reciprocal learning, the **state institutions involved need to cope with strict frameworks, hierarchies, and complex decision-making processes**. The tools which are needed for a network are quite of a difference related to the instruments in public administrations. Another challenge is the **persisting work in silos of institutions**. Even networks can become bubbles of interaction with little exchange to outsiders. TheMuseumsLab is engaged to overcome these barriers and to bring together the different stakeholders and to enhance their understanding of being part of a common cause and ecosystem.

TheMuseumsLab understands itself as an initiative dedicated to lifelong learning. This also implies **modifications in communication cultures** and in attitudes towards the wide range of museums professionals. Future leaders in the sector should become familiar with these approaches and learn for their future roles including in view of their interactions with the employees as well as the wider public. This implies that **criticism is part of a learning process**, and the failure is an opportunity to learn. Only this kind of attitude will provide the frameworks for a permanent transformation within rapidly changing frameworks.

In addition, the **current funding structures are only partly adapted to the most needed long-term cooperation**. This applies especially to the establishment of sustainable intercontinental networks which should be considered as long-term common endeavours. **The visa frameworks** are an area which needs further consideration. The whole process of applying for a visa reflects the persisting situations of power and questions new discourses in view of attracting more international experts e. g. to Germany.

Further Information

- [TheMuseumsLab Website](#) ↗
- [TheMuseumsLab Coordinator Website](#) ↗
- [TheMuseumsLab Youtube Channel](#) ↗



12

Radio Transfer – Communities in Dialogue

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

Radio Transfer was initiated in the context of Salzkammergut 2024 – European Capital of Culture and the related EU Deconfining project for enhancing exchanging between two continents on life, dreams, hope of school students in Austria, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The project also includes explicitly having fun together too.

Objectives are:

- Providing a framework of exchange and dialogue to enhance intercontinental communication opportunities
- Reviving an existing cooperation between free and community radios from both continents which ceased to be operational during the pandemic
- Cooperation between local radios to learn from each other related to culture, communication and radio making.
- Cooperating with positive impact including on the environment and reducing the CO2 footprint of radio making and diffusion on both continents

The networking project Radio Transfer

- Communities in Dialogue is part of the programme of Salzkammergut 2024 – European Capital of Culture and will be realized by Freie Radio Salzkammergut in cooperation with Freie Radio B138.

Activities: There were several community building measures in 2023, such as radio workshops, discussion events and concerts with local initiatives and international radio makers. The highlight in 2024 is a one-week residency with international community radio projects in the inner Salzkammergut region and in Almtal area. A series of public events will be held on an ongoing basis during the residencies.

Future plans: From an Austrian local radio point of view, future plans comprise the involvement of further local schools in the project to enhance exchange opportunities. The enlargement of this cooperation intends also to develop the project in the sense of co-creation and co-responsibility of the implementation, so that the exchange is built on more solid ground. Furthermore, the local project coordination in Austria aims at the travelling to Zambia to further cooperation and to contribute with positive local impact (e. g. common radio making) based on local needs.



Ownership(s)

The intercontinental and international co-ownership of the project is as follows:

Regional team in Salzkammergut (Austria) and their networks

- Schönau8, cultural association ↗
- Kulturverein Mühldorf, cultural association ↗
- Radio B138 ↗
- New Middle School (NMS) Scharnstein ↗
- Radio Continental Drift Bielefeld, Germany ↗

Support team in Upper Austria

- Austria Zimbabwe Friendship Association ↗
- Time's Up - Interface "Tales of Resilience" ↗
- Radio FRO ↗
- Radio Salzkammergut ↗
- Dorf TV ↗

Team Zambia in Zongwe

- ZONGWE FM ↗

Team Zimbabwe in Binga, Siachilaba, Harare, and, Chinotimba township in Victoria Falls

- Binga Highschool ↗
- Siabuwa Highschool ↗
- Simonga Ngoma Buntibe ensemble at Siachilaba Secondary School ↗
- Kunzwana Trust Harare ↗
- Delicious Tunes ↗
- Mokoomba Band from Victoria Falls ↗

Further international partners

- Radio Transfer at Salzkammergut 2024 – European Capital of Culture ↗

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

Main success factors include the building of the project on a **solid partnership based on reciprocal confidence** and covering different backgrounds like cooperation with schools, experience in radio making, backgrounds in a wide range of cooperation settings (e. g. from culture, business, etc.). Furthermore, the intercontinental partnership as well as the settings for exchange of the participants **require substantial time which needs to be planned (and financed)** in order to overcome e. g. technical obstacles or solid partnership building.

The projects should also integrate elements to **celebrate together** and to also involve a wide range of indirect target groups (e. g. the wider local population beyond the school context). Especially successful was the concert of a renowned Zimbabwean band who partnered with Austrian musicians for a concert. **A lot of effort was dedicated to the integration of the African musicians in the local Austrian context** (visits to the involved schools, exchanges with local partners, local cultural and other tours, etc.). The concert was attended by a wide range of **local residents**. The variety of backgrounds as well as the **huge interest were a very positive surprise for the organisers** and an eye-opener related to the far reach of interest for the African continent. **They question also why other initiatives with the African continent become not much more visible locally**. The organisers recommend also to **invest in high-quality artistic expressions from Africa** to generate the highest possible positive impact on local level in Europe. Furthermore, it was needed to have a **professional music manager aside** who took care e. g. of the visa for the musicians from Zimbabwe and took over the related responsibilities.

Key elements to take into account are to **build such a project on considerable background experience**. Especially school cooperations require specific know-how and building of networks and trust in the long run. The Radio B138 works already for a long time with the educational sector and could rely on this expertise and background for the intercontinental outreach and cooperation.



The technical features for such an exchange are crucial. Schools are often not well-equipped to stream or to use digital equipment. There is also a related big difference between the schools on both continents to work remotely. The Austrian schools could benefit of the technical support of the radio who disposes of good microphones and cameras and the related technical know-how. The exchange had to be organised in several steps with registering and related follow-up replies. Foreseeing technical support would be of good added value for this kind of projects and worked perfectly for the intercontinentally streamed concert in June 2024. Furthermore, **the question of language is important.** The project exchanges were done in English. African students have already a very good level of English (and speak several other languages). They might have had also some help of their teachers. **The Austrian students were supported by their teachers** and by the Arge Zimbabwe in order to allow them also accessing other (than English) languages which are spoken in the region of their cooperating schools. The local mobilisation and interest to engage for intercontinental cooperation was very good. **Local entrepreneurs contacted the organisers with offers to sponsor** e. g. school equipment for the African partners. **However, offers of this kind need first to be discussed with the intercontinental project partners** as in this case local businesses exist already to furnish schools. They provide also local employment and training for the youth. The intended help could have had substantial negative impact on them.

Projects like “Radio Transfer” still rely substantially on “special” occasions like European Capitals of Culture or other major events in order to get started and/or to receive funding. Such a renowned and big band from Zimbabwe could not be financed to come to Austria without this support. Once a first step succeeded, some of the project parts like networking schools could be also continued on a voluntary basis. However, it must be clear that **major impact and mobilisation of the local population can only achieved with substantial time investment (and related funding).**

Based on the long-lasting background of the cooperation, **a range of broad recommendations for cooperation projects were provided:** Respectful and humble approaches to learn to understand. Sustainable support for local initiatives

instead of fancy concepts. Build long-term cooperation. Kunzwana means listening to each other in ChiShona – a concept which is valuable for cooperation. Interactive projects to involve a wide range of diverse audiences. Invest in formats furthering resilience (of women) like the project “Tales of Resilience” of Time’s Up. Understand different frameworks of project implementation on both continents and build-up better communication frameworks like Tonga Online, Tonga OnAir, IT-centres and radio stations. Open exchanges on differences in local and global contexts (urban-rural divide, wealth, income, colonial pasts). Mobilise solidarity in ideal and material means (e. g. fundraising for Zongwe FM Community Radio).

Further Information

The website mulonga.net provides a range of related and background information [↗](#)



13

TPAAE – Transcultural perspectives in art and art education

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The project Transcultural Perspectives in Art and Art Education (TPAAE) investigates contemporary art in Europe and East Africa, and forms of art education on both continents in a transcultural perspective.

The approach of the project is innovative in recognizing mutual artistic and cultural influences between Europe and East Africa since the times of Great Avant-garde until contemporary globalization and setting up the theoretical and practical dialogue between these two cultural areas, the same time valuing the cultural heritage of both and opening them for modern transformations for the sake of community and social development.

The profound research in transcultural perspectives on art and art education was realized within the TPAAE project by the Consortium containing academic and non-academic institutions from Poland, Italy, and Kenya. International and intersectoral mobility guaranteed the high level and effective sharing of knowledge. All the institutions investigated art, culture, and cultural heritage and had various complementing each other competencies, allowing for research and implementation of its effects into practice.

Transcultural perspective is the response to the three main strategies for the reduction of

otherness developed due to globalization: egocentrism, logocentrism, and ethnocentrism, and is essential, today more than ever, to persuade individuals to appreciate cultural diversity and to recognize the importance of defending and promoting tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

The TPAAE project developed according to three lines, each having its specific **objectives**:

- Theoretical – research on relations between East African and European art,
- Academic – an elaboration and an implementation of the programme in Fine Arts and Design at the university on the Kenyan coast in dialogue with European institutions,
- Practical – support of the development of the art scene in the region of Kenya.

The project was financed by the EU Horizon 2020 Programme. The project comprised 6 work packages of which outputs and deliverables are available on the project website.

The main **activities** included:

- The co-development of a diploma and bachelor's degree programme in contemporary art and design which were launched in 2023 in Kilifi, close to Mombasa at the Pwani University in Kilifi (note: it is the first art education on the university level at the Kenyan coast and the second one in Kenya).
- The common realization of the DUOS Festivals to provide room for intense artistic research from the transcultural perspective resulting in art creation and presentation during the festivals in Kenya and the following exhibitions in Poland, minding the importance of sharing the knowledge with students involved in the process and with the local community learning about the art.
- Accompanying research publications from the researchers involved from both continents in three countries (Poland, Kenya, Italy) and in the context of their universities and academic work.

The follow-up activities contain another EU-funded operation that started in 2023 involving again some partners from the TPAAE project in an enlarged consortium (CAPHE – Community and Artistic Participation in Hybrid Environments, is



a project financed by the EU research and innovation programme Horizon [↗](#) and on Facebook [↗](#)).

This follow-up project investigates the aesthetic experience of hybrid environments and how these change from physical environments. Hybrid environments are understood as combining physical and digital layers and are investigated from the perspective of the transformation of the aesthetic, sensible experience of art when it goes virtual and/ or extended. This transformation influences changes in practices of art creation, reception, dissemination, and exploitation. It also requires a rethinking of the community-building potential of art, while changing the physical environment to the hybrid one.

Ownership(s)

The TPAAE – Transcultural Perspective in Art and Art Education is a project financed by the EU research and innovation programme Horizon 2020 and co-owned by the partnership [↗](#) as well as the people engaged in its implementation.

- The involved coordinators [↗](#)
- The involved researchers [↗](#)
- The involved artists [↗](#)

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The imbalances are a fact included in **EU-financed projects** in which per definition the financial management is on the European side. This fact **can be considered an obstacle, but at the same time, it is a useful setting**, because cooperation with some East African institutions might be tricky including issues related to financial flows. It might be problematic too in ensuring content-wise outcomes and the persons involved in the research require **a support in the development of their academic technical skills**.

The political support for project endeavours, especially the one focused on the creation and implementation of Art and Design programmes at the Pwani University in Kilifi helped to speed up the implementation. It is so, because, in Kenya most of the university education programmes depend on a national credit

programme. Students who apply to enter this programme, get credit for their studies which needs to be reimbursed after the finalization of their studies. Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes ask for approval from the national government, while Diploma programmes usually require approval of TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training). New programmes developed in the framework of the TPAAE project got governmental approval rather fast as the National Ministry of Education was convinced of the quality of the work done. Also, the allocation of students with student credits was done already in the first year of the programmes' implementation, which usually does not happen before the second year. This happened thanks to effective lobbying by the coordinators in the TPAAE project, especially the Kenyan ones and by the Main Coordinator.

The research in art and culture as well as the cultural politics is developing very dynamically in many African countries including Kenya. Furthermore, the local art and **creative industries scenes e. g. in Kenya can provide very valuable insights for art and culture stakeholders from Europe**. This fact can be well-illustrated in the context of the follow-up project of the TPAAE aiming at working on hybrid (digital, augmented) environments in the context of art. Black Rhino VR is providing as a partner of “Meta” in Africa is impressive. **The ethical approach that is pursued by many stakeholders in Kenya is interesting and insightful, because they perceive** this new global space – the metaverse – as a new world where they can make their presence visible and build-in their own practices. There seems to be a local conviction in Nairobi that it is needed and worth to be part of these new digital and augmented spaces. **The related developments in European art and culture as well as the tech scene seem to be slowly and less ambitious**. This might be also due to the long-lasting technological backgrounds of European societies. This example also illustrates that the more **we can learn from others**, the better we can position ourselves in the context. Intercontinental cooperation provides certainly added value in this sense.

The EU projects allow for implementing these intercontinental cooperation activities which is of great added value. However, the **management of these projects** is complicated and time-consuming. It is impossible to work at



the same time teaching as a professor at e. g. an art university and to manage an EU-Horizon project. This can be solved temporarily by settings like taking sabbatical years for the time of the project duration. Furthermore, the information flow from the EU side is not always fully complete.

When the project manager of TPAAE coordinated the first Horizon project, she discovered only later what kind of information should be gathered to be included in the 1st Periodic Report, which caused a lot of additional work and stress, and could have been previously planned.

While the **project management is complicated and would need further capacity building (from the EU)** and further support (from e. g. the universities), the overall framework for the content-related implementation is very good. The **longer timeframes allow for the pertinent establishment of cooperation** frameworks and appropriate intercontinental mobilities. Both, theorists, and practitioners, that is artists, for example, encountering each other for the first time in countries where they have not worked before, need time to understand the context and each other. Time is also required to develop common ideas and to prepare the presentations.

Finally, art research, art education, and the activities to showcase are **equally important to invest in local eco-systems**. Crucial is **not to develop these activities again from a Western perspective**. The settings in the TPAAE project prevent this trap as they ensure the **full involvement of the Kenyan partners**. The new education programmes include a strong focus on African heritage, culture, and art. The art research recognizes the difference between aesthetics and the variety of art forms. **Especially performing and storytelling traditions allow for good anchor points related to contemporary video art** – to highlight one example. The DUOS Festivals supported common development of art and art education in the transcultural perspective and implementation in intercontinental settings **overcoming the “white gallery” approach**.

Further Information

- [The TPAAE project website](#) ↗
- [The TPAAE research programmes](#) ↗
- [The TPAAE education programmes](#) ↗
- [The DUOS Festivals](#) ↗
- [The follow-up project CAPHE](#) ↗



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Women's History Museum of Zambia

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

The Women's History Museum of Zambia was set up to document and revive narratives of African history with a specific focus on women. The cooperative was founded in the year 2017 by 10 like-minded women in Zambia in Southern Africa. It was initiated by the analysis that after more than 100 years under British colonial rule, the indigenous knowledge systems were under considerable pressure and had already partly disappeared.

Objectives: As stated in the Mission Statement, the museum aims

- To research, preserve and restore African indigenous knowledge and living histories focused on women.
- To introduce new cultural and historical knowledge through demystifying, popularising, and functionalising indigenous knowledge.
- To set an agenda of how African history on women is learned, how it is consumed and functionalised.

The knowledge production in Zambia and in many African countries was a living history. The concept of a museum is a recent model based on Eurocentric practices which was introduced to the country only 50 years ago. Many of the local museums continue to evolve in these museum models of the past. The Women's History Museum of Zambia aims at bringing forward new practice of knowledge collection and dissemination. Furthermore, indigenous knowledge is of considerable value in view of societal, environmental,

and economic challenges which might also provide future-oriented perspectives for local residents and project promoters – a field of potential further engagement by the Women's History Museum of Zambia cooperative.

The initiative is supported by national and international funders.

The **activities** and initiatives of the Women's History Museum of Zambia reflect on the new frameworks and principles of knowledge generation and dissemination by reconnecting with indigenous practices which were lost during the colonial times. These include storytelling, songs and rituals, artefacts connecting with the wider environment and reconnection with the important roles of women in society. The digital world allows for a most meaningful framework for better translating indigenous knowledge and to reconnect with the visual and storytelling practices of the pre-colonial times. The outreach to a wide range of people with all kinds of backgrounds is important for the work of the Museum and reflected in the multiple ways of communication the Museum uses.

The main activities include research, exhibitions, and a wide range of (cooperation) projects:

In a cooperation with Wikipedia, the visibility of women and their narratives was enhanced based on the analysis that only 20% of the content on this platform refers to women. The podcasts of leading ladies from Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa have the potential to reconnect people with the leading roles of women in African societies which were partly matriarchy societies before the colonial times.

A new approach related to the restitution of African artefacts in European collections: this work of the Women's History Museum of Zambia started with a concrete case and in cooperation with a Swedish Museum. African artefacts out of the context are difficult to interpret and to do justice to the objects and their (previous) owners. Reconnecting these objects with their original communities is important, and at the same time these artefacts tell also colonial stories. A collaborative approach involving both continents is required.

The cooperation with artists is an additional important layer which can contribute to the healing and the development towards post-colonial relationships. Artistic interrogations related to artefacts which were taken away might be able to elaborate new (connecting) narratives.



Furthermore, the Women's History Museum of Zambia aims at contributing to new ways of knowledge production in the context of the academia. The Western ways of academic research constitute barriers for the wider integration of indigenous knowledge. It is hoped to enlarge these debates with the approach of involving African academic research on indigenous knowledge in the wider academic debates and communities.

Ownership(s)

The ownership of the initiative is as follows:

- The Women's History Museum of Zambia Cooperative ↗
- The wide range of knowledge production owners with who the Women's History Museum of Zambia is exchanging and cooperating with
- The substantial number of local and international cooperation partner organisations which inspire and co-produce the work of the Women's History Museum of Zambia.

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

Initiatives like the Women's History Museum of Zambia are **per definition cooperative endeavours**. **Without the broad involvement of local communities, the local African and Zambian cultural heritage cannot be documented and disseminated. Due to the colonial past, the local indigenous knowledge and artefacts got also an international dimension** connecting it to other parts of the world as well as related narratives and stories. These facts require a continuous dialogue and connecting frameworks. The Museum has considerably invested in these connections to build up the activities and projects of the past years.

The projects of the Museum are also a success due the **careful attention which is dedicated to the ways and levels of communication. So far, the debates on colonialism are often very academic which makes it difficult for a wide range of populations to connect with.** The development of audiovisual **digital materials is a meaningful way to reach out to different strata of the population** while at the same time reconnecting with the oral traditions of knowledge dissemination on the African continent.

There is also a **need for a more careful reflection on the term and nature of museum.** On the African continent, it would be worth further reflecting on **how knowledge documentation and dissemination could be best addressed.** The future of museums might raise very different questions on the European and African continent. **Involving communities is a central element** to be taken into account. It is also important that the cultural heritage is accessible and explained in a meaningful manner.

Furthermore, **policy- and decision-makers should further take up debates on knowledge systems.** This field concerns not only culture (heritage) but interferes in a wide range of areas like education systems and international cooperation including the local-to-local dimensions.

Finally, there is a **need for much more conversation between the global south and the global north** to come up with modernised systems of collaboration. A related good practice is the so-called Museums Lab.



Further Information

- [The Women's Museum of Zambia Website](#) ↗
- [The Museum's exhibitions](#) ↗

The Museum's research activities

“Women's stories, experiences and incontestable displays of strength are often the very backbones of many societies. This sentiment rings true of the many Zambian women who built the foundations on which we stand. However, there is a dearth of documented knowledge and information in mainstream historical narratives of (Zambian) women from the perspective of Zambian women themselves. Our work as the Women's History Museum of Zambia is to research, preserve and restore Zambian indigenous knowledge and living histories focused on our women. This is achieved through the expansion and revision of cultural knowledge production.” ↗

The Leading Ladies Podcasts

“This is an ode to the women among us. Those who walked before us and those to come. Those who wore red clay masks and rested their heads on bended knees. Those who washed the cowry bead and swung the snuff cup. Those who weaved the baskets and wrapped the cloth. Those who fought for peace and danced to the drum.” ↗



15

Young Experts on Fair Culture

Objectives, Activities, Follow-ups

“Young Experts on Fair Culture” is an initiative of the German Commission for UNESCO. It pursues several **objectives**:

- to give global young voices a way to share ideas and research on “Fair Culture” (e. g. by involving young experts in global cultural policy gatherings).
- to examine the dimensions of Fair Culture from the perspectives of the younger generation (e. g. on fair culture journal: the contributions and publications are provided on a volunteer basis; thematic sessions as well; involvement on the drafting of the “Fair Culture Charter”; public consultation on the “Fair Culture Charter”
- to foster sustainable change in production, cooperation, and distribution patterns of culture on the globe in the sense of fair trade and working conditions.

The structures of the Fair Culture initiative are supported by the German Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Mexico, IFCCD, UNESCO Chair on Diversity of Cultural Expressions at the University of Laval in Québec, Canada, the Ministry of Culture of Colombia, and the National Commissions for UNESCO in France, in Kenya and in the Republic of Korea. All activities are free of costs and accessible. Senior experts are available for the younger generation involved in the platform. The young experts and researchers get access to expert know-how, information, and (global) network(s).

Activities: The initiative for Fair Culture was initiated by the German Commission for UNESCO back in 2017. Since the year 2022, the Fair Culture project also includes a global network of young experts. The call for young experts was launched in summer 2022. First activities included the participation of two young experts to the Mondiacult Conference in Mexico in September 2022. The two Young experts attended the conference in the capacity of speaker at 3 official side events such as: official Side Event “Fair Culture – A Key to Sustainable Development”, organized by the German Commission for UNESCO; Accelerating Education-Culture Linkages through Collaboration: Exploring partnerships with libraries and other cultural institutions organized by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions; Culture as a global public good: a human-centred agenda for cultural policies“, led by the Interagency platform on culture for sustainable development.

In the context of the initiative Fair Culture is also elaborated a Fair Culture Charter. One member of the young expert group is part of the editorial board for the Charter.

On voluntary basis they prepare the topic discussion for the “Monthly Returning of Young Expert for Fair Culture – Thematic Session”, where they act as presenters and moderators during the sessions. A first series of three thematic sessions took place from November, December 2023 to January 2024. The young experts get assistance from senior experts if needed. The young experts are also part thematic sessions on different themes with relevance for fair culture.

The young experts have already published a first Young Expert Journal on Fair Culture in 2023. The journal is coordinated and edited by the young experts. They invite junior and senior experts to contribute to the publication. Furthermore, the journal is peer-reviewed by senior experts. A second journal will be published in 2024.

Future plans related to the platform of young experts on Fair Culture are:

The mandate of the young experts has no defined end. A range of new activities are under consideration like the elaboration of podcasts, the development of residencies for the young experts or the development of co-operational activities with other youth (organisations). Furthermore,



the Fair Culture Charter will be launched in 2024. Related guidelines for implementation will be also published in 2024.

Discussions are ongoing to strengthen the cooperation with universities in the framework of the journal. These could include research cooperations or the initiating of thematic research foci in the area of Fair Culture. Furthermore, PhDs and other scientific work related to Fair Culture could be implemented together with different universities on the globe.

Increasing visibility for Fair Culture is another important element. Organising a forum on local, national and/or international level could be very helpful in this regard. Furthermore, the cooperation with artists, cultural workers and practitioners needs further development. Awareness needs to be raised for new ways of doing cultural cooperation in the sense of Fair Culture. This concerns also decision-makers like national UNESCO Commissions in many more countries.

Ownership(s)

- The German Commission for UNESCO [↗](#)
- The 15 Members of the Young Experts on Fair Culture Platform [↗](#)

Success Factors and Lessons Learned

The settings do allow for **interaction between young experts and researchers with more experienced colleagues and senior experts** is part of the success of the initiative. Young experts can learn from those colleagues and find open ears for questions related to their work.

The publishing of the first journal – however time-consuming – was a big success and the accomplishment of a lot of work and engagement. **It raises the visibility of young experts' capabilities and opportunities to feed global debates on cultural development and culture policy.**

Fair Culture requires long-term engagement to raise awareness first and to accompany actions towards updated practices in a second step. While the learning and exchanging frameworks are well in place for the network of young

experts on Fair Culture, the time and financial constraints are more challenging. **The related work has to be done in addition to their daily obligations. This context might be challenging to be maintained in the long run.**

Furthermore, the partnership for Fair Culture is still limited to produce concrete impact. **Much more key stakeholders e. g. in the countries of origin of the young experts need to be brought on board.** Change can only happen when **decision-makers are ready to exchange on new concept and start to modernise the frameworks** for culture-related activities in the sense of Fair Culture. The thematic sessions in which the young experts are involved might be a related first step for a widening of involvement and follow-up engagement.

Potential improvements in the context of the Fair Culture initiative and the related involvement of the young experts could be to **invest in clear terms of reference and related guidance of the young experts.** Which deliverables are expected by whom and by when? Which outcomes and related innovations in cultural development in the sense of Fair Culture should be achieved e. g. in five years' time? Which stakeholders are key in order to achieve positive change and how to involve these?

In addition, **symbolic payment/incentives of the work of the young experts would ease a long-term engagement of the group** and the achievement of more tangible impact in the different countries in which the experts are based.

The cultural policy requires substantial modernisation. The **legal frameworks** (like visa, international income tax rules, etc.) and **support programmes** (e. g. for mobility, eligibility criteria and countries) should be based on the concrete needs of the different artistic and creative sectors. **The policymaking process should be integrative and participative** in order to be meaningful and to cope with the requirements of Fair Culture. The actions should be as concrete as possible in order to **achieve concrete impact and positive change.**

Further Information

- The Fair Culture Initiative Website [↗](#)
- The first edition of the Young Expert Journal on Fair Culture [↗](#)
- The results of the consultations on the Fair Culture Charter [↗](#)



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About The Author

Sylvia AMANN is director of inforelais, Austria – tailored services for culture and creative industries (policy) developments. The former chair of the EU creative industries expert group OMC is dedicated to innovative policies for culture. Beyond innovation, Sylvia's research work for the European Parliament was focussed on policy support measures to overcome the Covid-19 crisis in the cultural and creative sectors as well as future culture policy options (2024-2029). Her policy paper on Collaborative Transformation Policies was published in the framework of the EU strategic action Creative FLIP. Sylvia also researches on ecological cultural policies and provides related action planning support. Sylvia Amann is working for international cultural cooperation for more than 20 years with a special focus on South Korea, Africa, and EU/rope. In 2022, Sylvia started research cooperation with the Canada Council for the Arts. She is the author of the Austrian Creative Export Strategy. In addition, Sylvia publishes on enhanced local-to-local EU-Africa cultural exchange. She is the author of a reflection paper on the future of touring and climate change. Sylvia assists the development of creative industries in four cities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, works as expert for Agenda 21 Culture Pilot Cities Programme, assisted the Urban Lab of Europe, and was panel member of the European Capitals of Culture and UNESCO Creative Cities.





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A Handbook to Support Local Stakeholders for Better Relations Between Africa and EU/rope and beyond

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