



# VOICES OF CULTURE

Structured Dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector

## Brainstorming Report

### AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT VIA DIGITAL MEANS

#### I. FRAMING

This report comes out from a Brainstorming session organised through the *Voices of Culture* process, a Structured Dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector. This process provides a framework for discussions between EU civil society stakeholders and the European Commission with regard to culture. Its main objective is to provide channel for the voice of the cultural sector in Europe to be heard by EU policy-makers. In addition, it aims to strengthen the advocacy capacity of the cultural sector in policy debates on culture at a European level, while encouraging it to work in a more collaborative way.

The Audience Development via Digital Means Brainstorming Session, held on 18 and 19 June in Amsterdam, has provided a space for exchange and discussion between around 35 participants representing the cultural sectors from the EU Member States.

The present report is the result of this discussion. It will be presented to the European Commission at a Dialogue Meeting in October 2015 in Brussels.

This document has been edited by three of these participants, coordinated via online digital means and in consultation with all 35 participants by the 3 July 2015:

Charlotte Saldanha

Dominic Smith

Amanda Windle

The Structured Dialogue was attended by representatives from a broad range of disciplines, all of whom have a stake in 'audience development via digital media', this included: academic researchers and practitioners, R&D specialists and transmedia designers, museums and cultural heritage administrators and managers, librarian and documentation specialists, and arts professionals from film, sound, music, opera, dance, and theatre.

## II. KEY ISSUES

**“When formulating cultural policy(ies) in Europe, digital should be considered an integral part of the cultural environment.”**

The following are overarching conclusions from the session:

1. Digital 'as well as', and terminology
2. Public value versus commercial value
3. IPR and know-how - participation, dissemination and use of creative works
4. Data-centricity - collect, share and store
5. The preservation of our cultural digital memory
6. Accessibility, capacity and inclusivity
7. Resources - knowledge exchange, monopolisation and diversification

Keywords: Professionalism, Training, Skills, Knowledge, Barriers, Mutual Impact, Participation, Social Inclusion

These key concerns are unpacked henceforth, as follows:

### **1. Digital 'as well as', and terminology**

1.1 We now find ourselves having moved beyond the 'digital shift' - thus, the notion of a 'digital shift' should no longer feature in any narrative around the 'digital economy' or 'audience development using digital means'. Digital is our reality and should be considered an additional channel for artistic dissemination/creation - thus, the use of the expression 'as well as'.

1.2. Digital must always combine with the non-digital. Engagement is the main aim of the cultural use of digital technology. Commercial consumption is merely a spill over and digital is not important in itself; cultural content is still key.

### **2. Public value versus commercial value**

2.1. At Policy Level, there needs to be a clear distinction between audience development for public good (citizenship, self-actualisation, social connection, human potential, creative expression) and audience development for commercial objectives even if these are two distinctions become intertwined.

2.2. There is a strong need for Public Policy Makers to play an active role in protecting a digital cultural environment which exists for the benefit of the public as cultural participants rather than mere consumers. This includes total transparency about what information is being gathered from audiences and why.

2.3. There is scope for the European Commission to collate examples of best practices in audience development from across Europe (see the Annex for an example of potential sources of best practice). What is required here is a monitoring and sharing of good practice (and results) rather than a recommendation for the creation of standards that may be a barrier for small cultural organisations. In general terms, there was an overall reluctance to establish sector standards, deeming this terminology intimidating when digital is still perceived as a challenge for many arts and culture organisations.

### **3. IPR and know-how - participation, dissemination and use of creative works**

3.1. There is a fundamental need for a review of the IP reality across the sector, within genres and across EU Member States.

3.2. This review should consider, among other aspects, where and how income from intellectual property and artistic works flows. Furthermore, IP should be assessed in light of digital for audience development purposes - as both a facilitating and disabling factor. Artistic ownership and remuneration should also be considered.

#### **4. Data-centricity - collect, share and store**

4.1. The creation of a 'data centric culture' requires those involved in audience development to consider to what extent, collection, sharing and storage are data-centric rather than audience-oriented. There is a need for proactive efforts to encourage data sharing within the cultural sector.

4.2. There is also a need to balance effort in collecting and analysing data with the impact of outcomes. This requires the sector's awareness of the need to protect privacy, whilst practicing other technical dimensions of data collection. There are perhaps some cultural fears and behaviour-changes needed between audience and cultural producers.

#### **5. The preservation of our cultural digital memory**

5.1. To support the adoption of a set of digital archival standards (or, expectations) and methods amongst organisations wishing to increase digital engagement, building on the work done in media arts by organisations like ZKM (Karlsruhe) and in larger museums like the Louvre (Paris), the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam) and the Science Museum (London). There is a need to support an increase in capacity to create, conserve and share robust archives relating to digital cultural activity beyond the aforementioned sector groups.

#### **6. Accessibility, capacity and inclusivity**

6.1. Support audience access to digital platforms. Audiences may feel excluded from engagement in digital cultural products due to a lack of prior knowledge of simple interface mechanics or a general degree of low digital literacy. As a sector we must gain a deeper understanding of this aspect of our audiences, meeting them within a comfortable space in order to playfully encourage their deeper engagement and crossing of thresholds into new inclusive cultural territory. 6.2. Audience development via digital means ought to be a people-focused, participatory and socially inclusive requirement be that a digital engagement activity or marketing strategy.

#### **7. Resources - knowledge exchange, monopolisation and diversification**

7.1. To ensure adequate support for the use of digital media and the adoption of standards and/or recommendations, whilst ensuring a healthy degree of diversity across cultural organisations of various scale and reach. Knowledge exchange between organisations (both big and small, as well as between small scale institutions in themselves) should become standard practice without fear of colonisation in order for new practices and innovations to flourish within an open atmosphere of collaboration. Also, this can be supported by granting better access to publicly funded documents, and academic research and journals in order to better utilise existing knowledge.

#### **By specific field / area of activity:**

The following fields and areas of activity are listed in no particular order of importance.

### **Audience development by live arts and related events**

- There is a need to balance effort in collecting and analysing digital data
- Audiences are publics not just users, there is a need to focus on behaviours, social inclusion, participation to curate and create a sense of community
- Digital audiences are more than just 'digital natives' and 'digital migrants'. These headings can be useful, but segment audiences by chronological age rather than by technical abilities (Roberts, 2010). Gen D - generational digital (Accenture, 2014) considers digital beyond age which helps with audience development to address intergenerational sociality and regional differences in broadband and other digital infrastructures. Through AD engagement activities cultural activity can be considered to have impact that can be measured through an acknowledgement of well being
- Everything is connected. There is a focus on the end-product in relation to the live arts, but the organisations producing the Art need to focus on audience development, content development and creation - which, are interconnected concerns
- There is a need to train Arts professionals, but we must consider budgetary concerns and infrastructure i.e. human and financial capacities
- Breaking barriers down by digital means is a way to reach more diverse audiences - to break down prejudices, myths and preconceptions - and a way to bridge gaps. The disparity amongst Arts organisations is huge. Whilst some have sophisticated digital concert halls (for example), others may not even have a YouTube channel for the release of documentation and short film.
- There is a need for organisations to integrate digital into their strategies and mission statements, to take ownership of Digital Audience Development. However, it should be clear why digital audience development is a strategic objective - be it for financial reasons or ultimately to reach out to wider more diverse audiences
- The sector needs to familiarise itself better with existing and shared digital platforms, and methods for dissemination of live arts content and product

### **Audience Development by Digital Collections**

- There needs to be a shift in a vision of digital collections. Now, the concern revolves around looking at collections as an asset, with a stronger focus on storytelling, as well as adopting other editorial and technical techniques
- Digital collections are not just ways of sharing information aside from the actual physical space of venues. There is scope for highly engaging digital stimuli, but a possible lack of imagination across the wider sector. The sensation is that museums and galleries do this very well in real-life, but the moment this transfers to the digital arena the engagement becomes much more focused on information-passing to a small research-oriented audience
- Need to invest in activities which encourage the popular use of digital collections. Current models of dissemination and access are too focused on traditional research activity
- Again, there is a significant skills deficit (not just skills to digitize, but a general sense of a 'digital confidence'), literacies and knowledge which leads on to protecting know-how in terms of IP
- There are many issues surrounding IP and copyright: including licensing issues and trying to open-up collections that can also be linked to audience behaviours (i.e. freely available, readily available for download and to be re-mixed, hi-res imagery etc.). There are also cost implications to making digital artefacts available online. For example, *Creative Commons* (<http://creativecommons.org/>): objects are being digitized but there is a need and a want to

make this freely available but (a) should this be non-commercial or (b) commercially available? There are challenges around either option

- Digital presents obvious economies of scale, but also there is a need to consider preservation of the non-physical, as the pace of technology is fast

### **Audience development by Cultural Products**

- There is work to be done requiring behavioural change around new devices and media (i.e. e-books, streaming online, social media, apps, data analytics), to overcome the fear that the new/digital tools replaces the 'old tools'
- There is a need to look at content and how this is experienced across digital channels, considering multiple device usage. This raises the issue of hybridisation and the audience's ability to share and copy content across devices and platforms

### **Audience development by Digital Works and Online Services**

- A key concern was the findability and usability of data i.e. metadata
- The representatives would like to see platforms for sharing skills (possibly through an enhanced digital capacity of the Creative Europe desks) and a collective knowledge and sharing by the Commission / EU for cultural professionals: methodologies, case studies, research etc. Divided by fields - but cross-searchable
- Europe is a key locus for collaborations with the cultural sector, because of the diverse and heterogeneous group, however, there is disparity across Europe

## **III. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**

This document outlines a framework of digital competencies that illustrate the need for adequate resources in the form of: political, economic and legal resources at an EU level. The political focus as defined by the group concentrates upon AD via DM as a way of reducing the digital gap and rectifying inequalities in the balance of European market oriented policy (ticket selling) with the many social integration and inclusion opportunities AD via DM can offer the cultural sector. It was strongly felt by the group that AD work should make use of socially inclusive, collaborative processes engaging audiences through opportunities for co-creation of content, service and product.

AD via DM offers a way to develop innovative process and procedure within arts organizations. It creates opportunities to construct new and existing European culture within the digital spaces of the arts and culture sector. However, this strongly relates to an identified need to acknowledge the importance of the long term preservation of our general digital heritage and artworks generating new content and dissemination engagement activities.

AD via DM is part of a larger conversation about the importance of culture to society, it is not a separate issue. In order to be effective, AD via DM requires an adequate investment of resources including financial, legal and political resources. This was a recurring and strongly voiced need from multiple representatives. There is impetus for an EU cultural policy and strategy to engage audiences via DM.

There is a need for a defined set of digital skills and heritage indicators (for monitoring) and sometimes for standards within the cultural the sector. This was viewed as having multiple

outcomes as a result of the diversity of backgrounds and opinions present at the session. However, the main point of agreement was that this is a clear set of aspirational standards rather than an enforcement of policy.

It was also voiced that these aspirational standards be manifest consistently with an understanding of the different skill sets required across the sector, i.e. to identify the different skills required between museums and theatre to support new (digital) literacies. These literacies also relate to the measured impact AD via DM has upon on both our immediate community and wider society. Enabling improved collaborative practices that expand our core capacity ensure agile communication and a deep engagement in the digital (circular) economy.

There is already a lot of excellent collaborative practice that exists within our sector but often within the larger organisations. It is vital that new digital skills remain relevant to our main cultural missions. Furthermore, digital skills for marketing are not the same thing as digital skills for engagement and sometimes those languages need to be distinct. We are at risk of capacity building small groups to do expansive digital work at great expense whilst losing day-to-day contact through educational programmes. It is important that Digital practices exist 'as well as' rather than overshadow existing best practice. The arts and culture sector must maintain a balanced approach to increasing digital capacity. Whilst there are opportunities to optimise our engagement practices through digital media, we should acknowledge that this is not a 'one size fits all' scenario. Diversity is key at both the European and regional levels.

Cultural organisations and funders need to recognise and use more sophisticated modes to understand their audiences. We need to move beyond thinking about audiences as simple 'users', and consider them as 'publics' actively engaging within culturally rich spaces. The rich data provided by digital media allows us to move away from unreliable demographic profiles of our audiences to behavioural and motivational models on the one side and sensory digital ethnographies on the other. A mix of training, research, public engagement and knowledge exchange can give us a greater insight into our audience's' wants and needs.

We acknowledge that AD via DM has led to a shift in current engagement processes and practices, altering our understanding of audiences and our vision of the cultural field. This has had an impact upon our current economic models and has raised numerous concerns about how funding at local-level remains necessary, yet is under constant threat. This awareness raises two important questions: Who has access to culture? And, how do we use DM to reduce the inequalities of access to culture by developing existing and new audiences? For instance, there was a strongly voiced need to better understand our audiences and how to reach them via digital means. This is not as simple as asking who does and does not use Twitter. Moreover, what is relevant today as a digital platform (like social media) may not be relevant or supported (or openly accessible, i.e. new business models and revenue streams) in the near future (Boyd, 2014). This question seeks to address some of the wider social inequalities we see amongst our audiences. It requires both a collation of current research into a practical narrative and a body of robust research and knowledge exchange that should follow this report.

Audience development is about the influence audiences can have upon arts and culture. The European Union needs to support this definition via an agile digital cultural policy, which relates to its multiple regions. For example, the barriers will be different between a mega-city like Paris, a deep rural area like the Alps or an organisation based in a diverse urban and rural area like Warwickshire or a network that exists only online. In the UK for instance there are 6 classifications

for urban and rural geographies (DEFRA, 2009). There should be an awareness at a policy level of the constraints faced within the sector to better understand our economic limits and a gain improved knowledge of how the cultural sector has a positive impact upon society. This in turn will inform how we improve our ability to working in the arts and cultural sector via digital means.

AD by DM in this document has related to the following areas set out at the start of the structured dialogue. The following areas - live arts and related events, Digital Collections, Cultural Products, Digital Works and Online Services - have been addressed both holistically and independently though one of the break out groups stressed that these areas are co-related and sometimes co-dependent i.e., online services may overlap with digital collections strategies, OR digital collections in the future will need to accommodate the digital works of both today as well as preparing for tomorrow. Whilst some of the sections have been explored in more depth this may be a product of the 'structured dialogue' process, rather than a need to focus more attention on one specific area (for example, Digital Collections versus Digital Products).

We must also continue to address 'digitally-born', content creation (in relation to a sustainable archive) i.e. Digital materials that are not intended to have an analogue equivalent. Our concern is that due to the swift pace of technological development and rapidly changing digital tools, content from only 10 years ago is disappearing, it requires the preservation of out of date technology to remain useable. This point relates to an earlier statement about innovation and the need to better management of our media. We need enhanced support when it comes to the preservation of digital content (and material) that was made by digital means. These key concerns can be stated as a need to address the sustainability of digital practices and preservation of digital artefacts. Advocacy for new aspirational policies needs to exist at a European level in order to foster an environment of supported innovation, new understanding of our audiences and the development of a future-compatible archive our digital media. This is seen as a vital necessity that will catalyse widespread, effective adoption of AD via DM.

## ANNEX 1

### Resources

The following resources help to build a bridge between past works like research mappings and participant knowledge shared in previous platforms. They are not an exhaustive list of resources but a sample of best practices relevant to AD via DM (though a little UK-oriented):

- Accenture (2014), 'Generation D: An emerging and important investor segment' <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insight-generation-d-emerging-important-investor-segment-summary.aspx>
- Art, Council England, AHRC & Nesta. (2013). Digital Culture: How arts and cultural organisations in England use technology
- Bakhshi, H. (2010). Culture of Innovation: An economic analysis of innovation in arts and cultural organisations
- Bakhshi, H. (2009). Not Rocket Science: A Roadmap for Arts and Cultural R&D
- Bilton, C. (2012). Happenstance Report: [www.artsdigitalrnd.org.uk/research](http://www.artsdigitalrnd.org.uk/research)
- Bernard, M., Munro, L. (2013). Ages and Stages: The place of theatre in representations and recollections of ageing
- Boyd, D. (2014) It's Complicated: the social lives of networked teens, Yale: New Haven and London
- Crawford, G. Bagnall G. and Light, B. (2012). Pulse: The London symphony orchestra student mobile project: <http://artsdigitalrnd.org.uk/research>
- Dekker, A (2010). Sustainable Archiving of Born-Digital Cultural Content - [http://virtueelplatform.nl/g/content/download/2010\\_archive2020\\_web.pdf](http://virtueelplatform.nl/g/content/download/2010_archive2020_web.pdf)
- (2009). DEFRA Classification of Local Authorities in England Updated Technical Guide: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/area-classifications/rural-urban-definition-and-la/rural-urban-local-authority--la--classification--england-/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/products/area-classifications/rural-urban-definition-and-la/rural-urban-local-authority--la--classification--england-/index.html)
- (2014). Experian Marketing Services, Key Trends in the Population: How the UK Population has changed and what this means to you and your organisation
- Giannachi, G. (2012). Info-objects: embedding objects with audience interpretation imperial war museum: social interpretation research and development report
- Hallam, S., Gaunt, H., Pincas, A., Varvarigou, M., McQueen, H. Music for Life Project: The role of participation in community music activities in promoting social engagement and well-being in older people
- Meyer, E.T. (2013). Digitally scratching new theatre London's Battersea Arts Centre engaging via the web
- Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, Lateral Thinkers. (2013). Culture Segments
- Nesta. (2012). Developing the CulturApp: Lessons for the sector
- Petrie, M., Schutt, M., Hadida, A.L., Barakat, S. & Cruz, A. B. (2012). Smooth sea never made a skilled sailor DERO project: research findings and insights final report



- (2009). PriceWaterhouseCoopers Advisory Government and Public Sector, Champion for Digital Inclusion The Economic Case for Digital Inclusion
- Punchdrunk. (2012). Punchdrunk: Extending the experience of immersive theatre through digital technology, Digital R&D Fund for Arts and Culture in England – case studies from the pilot
- Roberts, S. (2010). The Facts, Fictions and Future of Older People and Technology, Intel Corporation. Retrieved 17/3/15 from [www.ilcuk.org.uk](http://www.ilcuk.org.uk)



# VOICES OF CULTURE

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## ANNEX 2

### List of participants

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANISATION
Charlotte	Appelgren	CineRegio aisbl (European Network of Regional Film Funds)
Kevin	Bacon	Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove
Luca	Bergamo	Culture Action Europe
Árpád	Bóczén	Association of Cultural Heritage Managers
Alessandro	Bollo	Fondazione Fitzcarraldo
Sara	Bozanic	Institute for Transmedia Design
Anita	Debaere	Pearle-Live Performance Europe
Susanna	Eastburn	Sound and Music
Mie Marie Vinther	Ellekilde	Meaning Making Experience
Paul	Glinkowski	Arts Council England
Michael	Gyldendal	Danish Museum of Science and Technology
FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANISATION

Nadia	Hatzimitraga	University of Western Macedonia - School of Fine and Applied Arts
Dafydd	James	Network of European Museum Organisations
Isabel	Jolly	RESEO- European Network for Opera and Dance Education
Pauliina	Kinanen	Finnish Museums Association
Olga	Kolokytha	The European Opera Centre
Anne	Krebs	Louvre
Sejul	Malde	Culture24
Miguel Angel	Martin Ramos	European Academy of Yuste Foundation
Charles	Noordman	European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA)
Julia	Osada	European Music Council
Barna	Petranyi	Pro
Virginia	Ravaioli	TRAMES onlus
Charlotte	Saldanha	European Union Youth Orchestra
Outi	Salonlahti	Culture for All Service
Jade	Schiff	ROOTS & ROUTES
Dominic	Smith	ISIS Arts
Chris	Torch	Intercult
FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANISATION

Aleksandra	Uzelac	Institute for Development and International Relations
Nan	van Houte	IETM
Heidi	Wiley	European Theatre Convention (ETC)
Michael	Wimmer	EDUCULT
Amanda	Windle	DigiLab, University of the Arts London