On the Move is the international information network dedicated to artistic and cultural mobility, gathering 73 members registered in 27 countries. Since 2002, On the Move provides regular, up-to-date and free information on mobility opportunities, conditions and funding, and advocates for the value of cross-border cultural mobility. Co-funded by the European Union and the French Ministry of Culture, On the Move is implementing an ambitious multi-annual programme to build the capacities of local, regional, national, European and international stakeholders for the sustainable development of our cultural ecosystems.

On the Move regularly commissions researchers to investigate different themes closely related to the network’s activities and the work carried out by its members. Reflecting on transversal concerns and key areas of artistic and cultural mobility, the network tries to establish a clearer picture of the current movements and trends while formulating policy recommendations.

https://on-the-move.org

⚠️ This yearbook and its links have been designed primarily for digital reading. Please consider carefully which sections you print and how you print them.

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This guide uses the font Luciole – a typeface developed explicitly for visually impaired people.

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Data and analysis https://github.com/onthemoveotm

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Foreword

From vulnerability to reparation

Professional development programmes (training schemes, workshops, peer-to-peer learning sessions, mentoring, and more) are usually not the first thing On the Move is known for. We are recognised more often as the cultural mobility information network that, together with its members and partners, circulates free and funded mobility opportunities, and advocates for a fairer, more diverse, and more sustainable cultural mobility.

However, over the past 8 years, On the Move has often been approached to contribute to or conceptualise professional development programmes that cover the internationalisation of practices. These have targeted in particular artistic teams in the performing arts, music, and visual arts sectors, as well as those working in cross-disciplinary formats, and have taken place several times in France and Belgium, and on occasion in Finland, Wales, Tunisia, Malaysia, Cambodia, and other countries.

One of On the Move’s flagship programmes in this regard is PARI!, supported by the French Ministry of Culture and the Institut français. This programme aims to accompany artistic teams in the performing arts, music and visual arts sectors in France (including its overseas territories) to internationalise their practices, with a strong emphasis on reflecting on the multifaceted ways internationalisation can take place, and the various forms of shared responsibility it entails.

Echoing our holistic definition of cultural mobility, On the Move’s approach in this work considers the ‘international’ first and foremost as a space of reflection, dialogue, and situated forms of action.

Members of On the Move have also initiated and strengthened their own professional development programmes – including, to name just a few, IETM with the IETM Campus, the European Music Council fellowship, the Asia-Europe Foundation with its art journalists’ fellowship, and Mekong Cultural Hub with its ‘Learning and Support’ programme, as well as others through initiatives like the Erasmus+ project ‘Ready, Steady, Go’ with the Roberto Cimetta Fund, Busart and Liv.in.g, or through mentorship programmes like that of Kooperativa Platform.

On the Move set up a working group on professional development programmes, following the successful Erasmus+ project ‘Learning Trajectories’ dedicated to strengthening the quality of mentoring programmes that support the internationalisation of the European arts and culture sector, with a particular focus on performing arts.

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1 https://on-the-move.org/work/projects/pari
2 https://on-the-move.org/about/editorial-policy
3 This approach was also very much inspired by one of the first programmes of its kind in France, DeploY, co-initiated within Spectacle Vivant en Bretagne with the then-coworkers, Isabel Andreen and Pierre-Yves Charlois. https://www.spectacle-vivant-bretagne.fr/i-dont-speak-french/
5 https://www.emc-imc.org/?id=1876
7 https://www.mekongculturalhub.org/learning-support/
8 https://www.cimettafund.org/en/mobility-grants/
10 https://on-the-move.org/network/working-groups/international-professional-development-programmes

The project was coordinated by EUNIA in collaboration with On the Move, Matera Hub and FACE-Fresh Arts Coalition Europe (OTM member).
It was therefore very relevant, in this European Year of Skills, for On the Move to take training and professional development as the key theme of its 2024 Yearbook investigating cross-border cultural mobility flows.

As in previous editions, the Yearbook is enriched by John Ellingworth’s data analysis of open calls circulated by On the Move during the year 2023. John shares insights on the overview of skills and needs in training, but more importantly on experimental forms of professional development that try to shift power structures or set working practices. The focus of the calls analysed is indeed mostly ‘on soft skills, contextual knowledge, reflection, and discussion: not learning how to do something, so much as learning things that might reorient or enrich a current practice, with the material of the training programme arising from the interaction of the participants’.

This closely echoes Birgitta Persson’s perspective on ‘cultural sensitivity awareness’: ‘Cultural sensitivity is the process of becoming aware of cultural differences without valuing them. It is about observing and acknowledging cultural variations and diversity without the need to say what is better or worse. Inclusion for me starts with this. Needless to say, studying and understanding the geopolitical as well as the historical context of the field(s) we engage with is also essential.’

In analysing open calls for training, John recalls as well the fragility of working conditions for artists and culture professionals. One can note the obstacles to accessing such opportunities, even if they cover costs of mobility: ‘only around a third of training calls (32.1%) paid any stipend for the time of training itself. 5.7% made additional funding available to cover access costs.’

Such programmes risk recreating or even reinforcing inequalities that are already in play within the mobility opportunity space – inequalities that are also to be found in the Yearbook’s overall geographical analysis.

Another form of inequality is the question of environmental sustainability and the danger that actions in this area don’t take into consideration the many complexities of the world we are living in. As Vânia Rodrigues puts it in her text: ‘Embracing sustainability while working internationally in the arts, then, might have less to do with dutifully applying green recommendations than be about unlearning ways of doing which are tied to colonialist and mercantilist legacies. The skills we as a sector need to develop are less anchored in certainty than in ambiguity – that is why, I argue, learning through eco-ethical dilemmas might be vital. Prescriptive approaches to sustainability leave contradiction and complexity behind, or, at the very least, belittle them. Experimenting with eco-ethics implies redirecting our attention to mutually reinforcing relationships between the domination of nature and the domination of women, races, and classes.’

As Vânia Rodrigues asks: ‘How to teach vulnerability?’... To which we could add: how to teach reparation? How can capacity building programmes, which seem to hold their values close to heart, be one of the means to address reparation for devastated contexts, countries and territories, in a longer-term perspective?

Some of these questions, as well as the question of our own vulnerabilities in dealing with diverse contexts in professional development programmes, are not directly tackled in this publication. But such questions will certainly be asked, along with many others, at the Cultural Mobility Forum 2024,12 the event to which this Yearbook is connected, and the culmination of another great year of coordination and curation orchestrated by On the Move Director of Operations, Yohann Floch.

While waiting for the Forum’s panel sessions, we hope you enjoy reading this Yearbook edition and the very rich analysis and articles it includes.

Marie Le Sourd
Secretary general

12 https://on-the-move.org/about/our-news/cultural-mobility-forum-2024-caernarfon-wales-and-online
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Executive Summary

This is now our third Yearbook analysing trends in cultural mobility. The first, covering activity from 2021, had a special focus on the digital mobility that was then springing up in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. A second edition, in 2022, looked at the topic of environment and sustainability and its growing ubiquity in response to overlapping ecological crises. This new edition looks back at these two themes while relating them to a third – training and professional development. As a topic, it provides a window onto the concerns of today by linking them to our ideas of what’s coming next.

The first section of this yearbook is dedicated to analysing open calls that were published on the On the Move website in 2023 – in total, 551 calls for funded mobility opportunities, with 77 countries and territories as destinations. We attempt to chart changes across regions, disciplines and types of mobility in order to get a broad view of what happened throughout the year.

In the second section two writers give a personal perspective on the subject of training and professional development. In a first article, Birgitta Persson reflects on the changing face of international collaboration, sketching five key challenges for the field to consider, ranging from the importance of local learning and cross-collaboration to the impact of AI and new technology as it reformulates the ‘live’. In the second, Vânia Rodrigues questions internationalisation in light of the green transition, highlighting a need for ‘unlearning ways of doing which are tied to colonialist and mercantilist legacies’.

Key insights

- 86% of all calls focused on in-person activities – around the same share as last year.

  → Hybrid mobility has found its place in the ‘new normal’. Calls that involved a mix of online and in-person activity made up 10.5% of all calls in 2023, versus 9.1 % in 2022.

  → Online-only formats, however, continued to decline. After falling from 18.5% of all calls in 2021 to 6.4% in 2022, online-only or remote opportunities made up just 3.4% of calls in our data for 2023. Of these, a third were focused on training and professional development – a key format for online work.

- 82 calls were labelled as relating thematically to environment and sustainability – 14.9% of all calls during 2023. In spite of this topical interest, opportunities providing extra financial support for green forms of travel remain rare.

Around 1 in 10 calls in our 2023 data were principally focused on training and professional development. While these opportunities were present across art forms, Performing Arts (25% of the subset) and Music & Sound (16.1%) were more strongly represented.
Africa was the region where training made up the largest share of opportunities – 32.3%. Regionally, calls showed some different assumptions about the experience levels of participants, with opportunities outside Western/Northern Europe calls tending to focus more on practical/hands-on experiences and ‘essential’ skills. In countries with higher levels of subvention and more established art scenes, programmes seldom concentrated on ‘hard’ skills, and often described themselves by focusing on how they planned to change or evolve the sector as a whole (rather than the skills of participants).

Looking across the formats and content of all calls focused on training we can make some observations:

- **41% of training calls adopted either online-only or hybrid formats.** Hybrid formats (30% of training calls) favoured an initial online phase (usually a small commitment spread over a longer timeframe) followed by a short, intense period of in-person work. While it may be common for training to take place online, only 8.9% of training calls had a focus on digital skills themselves, either artistic or administrative.

- **37.5% of training calls were open to culture professionals** – more than twice the share of other opportunities in our data. Calls that targeted artists also sometimes centred on production, fundraising, or marketing: while 51% of calls focused on artistic training, 43.1% were focused on administrative matters, and 5.9% a mix of both.

- **The emphasis was mainly on contextual knowledge, reflection, and discussion – engaged with during group work.** 64.3% of calls involved some sort of collective work, and peer learning was common above ‘hierarchical’ learning formats. 37.5% of training calls described themselves as involving mentoring, speaking to the need for responsive, tailored forms of support.

- **Aside from art form, the most common factor of eligibility was age** – 26.8% of calls had a maximum age – with 35 years the most common cut-off. As if often the case, however, time and means are ‘hidden’ obstacles to participation: only around a third of training calls (32.1%) paid any stipend for the time of training itself. 5.7% made additional funding available to cover access costs.
Résumené


Dans la première section de ce Yearbook dédiée à l’analyse des opportunités de mobilité transfrontalière, la principale source des données est l’ensemble des appels à participation postées sur le site Internet d’On the Move, qui en 2023 répertorie 551 appels pour des opportunités financées en direction de 77 pays et territoires. Nous essayons de retracer les flux de la mobilité artistique et culturelle à travers les régions du monde, les disciplines et les types de mobilité afin d’avoir une vue d’ensemble tout au long de l’année.

La seconde section du rapport contient deux articles offrant des perspectives complémentaires sur la formation continue et l’accompagnement professionnel. Dans son article, Birgitta Persson réfléchit sur le visage changeant de la collaboration internationale, esquissant cinq défis clés à prendre en compte dans ce domaine, allant de l’importance du niveau local de l’accompagnement et de la collaboration jusqu’à l’impact de l’intelligence artificielle et des nouvelles technologies qui redéfinissent la notion de « présentiel ». Dans son article, Vânia Rodrigues questionne l’internationalisation à la lumière de la transition écologique, soulignant la nécessité de « désapprendre nos manières de faire, liées aux héritages colonialistes et mercantilistes ».

Données clés

- 86 % de tous les appels portaient sur des activités en présentiel – soit à peu près la même proportion que l’année précédente.

  → La mobilité hybride a trouvé sa place dans la « nouvelle normalité ». Les appels impliquant une combinaison d’activités en ligne et en présentiel représentaient 10,5 % de tous les appels en 2023, contre 9,1 % en 2022.

  → Les mobilités exclusivement en ligne ont toutefois continué à décliner. Après avoir chuté de 18,5 % des appels en 2021 à 6,4 % en 2022, les opportunités exclusivement en ligne ou à distance ne représentaient que 3,4 % des appels dans nos données pour 2023. Parmi ceux-ci, un tiers était axé sur la formation continue et l’accompagnement professionnel – un format clé pour la mobilité en ligne.

- 82 appels ont été labellisés comme ayant un lien thématique avec l’environnement et la durabilité – 14,9 % de tous les appels en 2023. Malgré un intérêt toujours d’actualité, les opportunités apportant un soutien financier supplémentaire aux formes durables de voyage restent rares.
Environ 1 appel sur 10 dans nos données 2023 était principalement centré sur la formation et le développement professionnel. Bien que ces opportunités soient présentes dans toutes les disciplines artistiques, les arts de la scène (25 % du sous-ensemble) et la musique/création sonore (16,1 %) étaient plus fortement représentés.

L'Afrique est la région du monde où la formation continue représente la plus grande part des opportunités de mobilité transfrontalière – 32,3 %. Au niveau régional, les appels ont montré des hypothèses différentes concernant les niveaux d'expérience des participant·es, les opportunités en dehors de l'Europe de l'Ouest et du Nord ayant tendance à se concentrer davantage sur les expériences pratiques et les compétences « essentielles ». Dans les pays bénéficiant de niveaux de subventions plus élevés et de scènes artistiques plus établies, les programmes d'accompagnement se concentraient rarement sur les compétences « techniques », mais plus comme une manière de changer ou de faire évoluer le secteur dans son ensemble (plutôt que sur le gain de compétences précises pour les participant·es).

En examinant les formats et contenus de tous les appels axés sur la formation continue, nous pouvons faire quelques observations :

- **41 % des appels de formation ont adopté des formats soit exclusivement en ligne, soit hybrides.** Les formats hybrides (30 % des appels dédiés à l'apprentissage) privilégiaient une première phase en ligne (généralement une participation étalée sur une période plus longue) suivie d'une période courte et intense de travail en présentiel. S'il est courant que les formations se déroulent en ligne, seuls 8,9 % des appels à mobilité liés à la formation étaient dédiés à de nouvelles compétences numériques, qu'elles soient artistiques ou administratives.

- **37,5 % des appels à mobilité portant sur la formation étaient ouverts aux professionnels de la culture, soit plus de deux fois la part des autres opportunités dans nos données.** Les appels ciblant les artistes portaient parfois sur la production, la collecte de fonds ou le marketing ; alors que 51 % des appels portaient sur la formation artistique, 43,1 % étaient axés sur des questions administratives et 5,9 % sur un mélange des deux.

- **Le focus principal des opportunités a été mis sur la connaissance contextuelle, la réflexion et la discussion – mises en œuvre lors d’un travail en groupe.** 64,3 % des appels impliquaient une forme de travail collectif, et l'apprentissage entre pairs était prévalent, plus fréquents que des formats d'apprentissage « verticaux ». 37,5 % des appels de formation se décrivent comme impliquant du mentorat, témoignant de la nécessité de formes de soutien adaptées et personnalisées.

- **Hormis la discipline artistique, le facteur d’éligibilité le plus courant était l’âge – 26,8 % des appels avaient un âge maximum – 35 ans étant le seuil le plus courant.** Cependant, comme souvent, le temps à investir et les moyens à disposition sont des obstacles « invisibles » à la participation : seulement un tiers des appels à mobilité liés à la formation continue environ (32,1 %) ont versé une allocation aux « apprenant·es » pour le temps de formation. 5,7 % ont mis à disposition un financement supplémentaire pour couvrir les frais d'accès.
Crynodeb Gweithredol

Dyma ein trydydd blwyddlyfr o'r bron sy'n dadansoddi tueddiadau mewn symudedd diwylliannol. Canolbwyntiodd y cyntaf, sy'n cwmpasu gweithgharedd o 2021, yn arbennig ar y symudedd digidol a oedd yn codi yn sgil pandemig Covid-19 bryd hynny. Yn 2022, edrychodd yr ail rifyn ar bwnc yr amgylchedd a chynaliadwydd a'i hollbresenoldeb cynyddol mewn ymateb i argyfnyddau ecollegol sy'n gorgyffwrdd. Mae'r rhifyn newydd hwn yn edrych yn ôl ar y ddwy thema hyn tra'n eu cysylltu â thrydedd – hyfforddiant a datblygiad proffesiynol. Fel pwnç, mae 'en edrych ar bryderon heddiw trwy eu cysylltu â'n syniadau o'r hyn sydd i ddog nesaf.

Mae rhan gyntaf y blwyddlyfr eleni yn ymroddedig i ddadansoddi galwadau agored a gyhoeddwyd ar wefan On The Move yn 2023 – cyfanswm o 551 galwad am gyfleoedd symudedd wedi'u hariannu, gyda 77 o wledydd a thiriogaethau yn gyrchfannu. Ceisiwn olrhain newidiadau ar draws rhanbarthau, disgyblaethau a mathau o symudedd er mwyn cael golwg eang ar yr hyn a ddigwyddodd drwy gydol y flwyddyn.

Yn yr arl dran mae dau awdur yn awdur yn rhoi perspectif personol ar bwnc hyfforddiant a datblygiad proffesiynol. Yn yr erthygl gyntaf, mae Birgitta Persson yn myfyrio ar delyu mewn cydweithredu rhynghwadol, gan roi braslon o bum her allwedd i'r maes eu hystyried, sydd yn amrywio o bwysigrwydd dysgu lleol a thraws-gydweithio i effaith dealllusrwydd artiffisial a thechnoleg newydd wrth iddo ail-lunio'r 'byw'. Yn yr ail, mae Vânia Rodrigues yn cwestiynu rhyngwladoli yng ngoleuni'r newid i ddod yn fwy gwyrdd, gan dynnu sylw at yr angen i 'ddad-dysgu ffyrdd o wneud sydd ynghlwm â threftadaethau trefedigaethol a masnachol'.

Mewnwelediadau allweddol

- **Canolbwyntiodd** 86% o'r holl alwadau ar weithghareddau wyneb yn wyneb - tua'r un gyfran â'r llynedd.
  → Mae symudedd hybrid wedi canfod ei le yn y 'normal newydd'. Roedd 10.5% o'r holl alwadau yn 2023 yn rhai a oedd yn cynnwys cymysgedd o weithgharedd ar-lein ac wyneb yn wyneb, o'i gymharu â 9.1% yn 2022.
  → Fodd bynnag, roedd ffformatu ar-lein yn unig yn parhau i ddirywio. Ar ôl gostwng o 18.5% o'r holl alwadau yn 2021 i 6.4% yn 2022, roedd cyfleoedd ar-lein neu o bell yn unig yn ddim ond 3.4% o'r holl alwadau yn ein data ar gyfer 2023. O'r rhai, roedd traean yn canolbwyntio ar hyfforddiant a datblygiad proffesiynol - ffomat allweddol ar gyfer gwaith ar-lein.

- **Labelwyd** 82 o alwadau yn ystod 2023 fel rhai sy'n ymweud yn thematig â'r amgylchedd a chynaliadwydd - 14.9% o'r holl alwadau. Er gwaethaf y diddordeb amserol hwn, mae cyfleoedd sy'n darparu cymorth ariannol yr ychwanegol ag arfer gyfer mathau gwyrrd o deithio yn parhau i fod yn brin.
  → Roedd tua 1 o bob 10 galwad yn ein data yn 2023 yn canolbwyntio'n bennaf ar hyfforddiant a datblygiad proffesiynol. Er bod y cyfleoedd hyn yn bresennol ar draws ffurfiau celf, cafwyd cynrychiolaeth gryfach i Gelfyddydau Perfformio (25% o’r is-set) a Cherddoriaeth a Sain (16.1%).

  Affrica oedd y rhanbarth lle'r oedd hyfforddiant yn ffurfio’r gyfyrain fwyaf o gyfleoedd - 32.3%. Yn rhanbarthol, dangosodd alwadau rai rhagdybiaethau gwahanol am lefelau profiad cyfranogwyr, gyda

Mewnwelediadau allweddol
chyfleoedd y tu allan i alwadau Gorllewin/Gogledd Ewrop yn tueddu i ganolbwyntio mwy ar brofiadau ymarferol a sgiliau 'hanfodol'. Mewn gwledydd sydd â lefelau uwch o nawdd a sin celfyddydol mwy sefydledig, anaml y byddai-rhaglenî'n canolbwyntio ar sgiliau 'caled', ac yn amly byddant yn disgrifio eu hunain drw ganolbwyntio ar sut yr oeddent yn bwriadu newid neu esblygu'r sector yn ei gyfanrwydd (yn hytrach na sgiliau cyfranogwyr).

Wrth edrych ar draws fformatau a chynnwys yr holl alwadau sy'n canolbwyntio ar hyfforddiant, gallwn wneud rai sylwadau:

◼ Mabwysiadodd 41% o'r galwadau hyfforddi naill ai fformatau ar-lein yn unig neu rhai hybrid. Roedd ffomatau hybrid (30% o'r galwadau hyfforddi) yn ffafro cyfnod ar-lein cychwynnol (fel arfer ymrwymiad bach wedi’i ledaenu dros gyfnod byr, ac yna cyfnod byr, dwys o waith wynen yn wynen. Er y gallai fod yn gyffredin iawn, felly’n ddefnyddio cyfnod ar-lein, dim ond 8.9% o alwadau hyfforddi oedd yn canolbwyntio ar sgiliau didol eu hunain, nail ai’n artystig neu’n weinyddol.

◼ Roedd 37.5% o'r galwadau hyfforddi yn agored i weithwyr proffesiynol ym maes diwylliant - mwy na dwywai th y gyfran o gyfleoedd eraill yn ein data. Roedd galwadau a dargedodd artistiaid weithiau'n canolbwyntio hefyd ar gynhyrchu, codi arian, neu farchnata: tra bod 51% o alwadau yn canolbwyntio ar hyfforddiant artistig, roedd 43.1% yn canolbwyntio ar faterion gweinyddol, a 5.9% yn gymysgedd o'r ddau.

◼ Roedd y pwyslais yn bennaf ar wybodaeth gyd-destunol, myfyrio, a thrəafodaeth – gan ymgyrchu ár rhain yn ystod gwaith grwp. Roedd 64.3% o'r galwadau yn cynnwys rhyw fath o waith ar y cyd, ac roedd dysgu gan gymheiriaid yn gyffredin uwchlaw ffomatau dysgu 'hierarchaidd'. Roedd 37.5% o alwadau hyfforddi yn disgrifio eu hunain fel rhai oedd yn cynnwys mentora, gan fynegi’r angen am ffurfiau o gefnogaeth ymatebol, wedi’u teiliwra.

◼ Ar wahân i’r ffurf gelf, oedran oedd y ffactor mwyaf gyffredin o ran cymhwysedd - roedd gan 26.8% o alwadau uchafswm oedran - gyda 35 mlywydd fel y torbynt mwyaf cyffredin. Fodd bynnag, yn fynych mae amser a modd yr hwystrostrâu 'cudd' i gyfranogiod: dim ond tua thraean o alwadau hyfforddi (32.1%) a dalodd unrhyw gyflog am yr amser hyfforddi ei hun. Roedd 5.7% yn sicrhau bod cyllid ychwanegol ar gael i dalu costau mynediad.
Data Analysis

by John Ellingsworth
Methodology

This report explores trends in cultural mobility during 2023, following the same approach as our previous Cultural Mobility Yearbooks. It does this primarily through a quantitative and qualitative analysis of calls for participation in residencies, meetings, fellowships, training activities, and other funded mobility opportunities for artists and culture professionals that were published on the On the Move website between 1 January – 31 December 2023 (with a few comparative references to the same data from 2022). In 2023, this gives us a dataset of 551 calls involving 77 countries and territories as mobility organisers or destinations. While it is not a complete picture of all activity, it represents our best effort to monitor activity in the mobility field, helped by our international network of more than 70 member organisations and individuals. The report also references other studies and reports produced by other actors in the field.

Scope and limitations

Because the dataset comes from calls published on the On the Move website it has some specific characteristics:

- It reflects On the Move's editorial policy and focus. This policy can be read in detail on our website, but we focus on funded programmes that cover at least some of the costs of travel (or that offer remuneration in the case of online/remote programmes). The calls that are posted to the website, and therefore analysed here, are generally one-off calls rather than those for ongoing, regularly funded programmes (which are separately listed in our mobility funding guides).

- We cover opportunities for all actors in the sector: artists, culture professionals and/or cultural organisations (from institutions to small collectives and associations), funders, policymakers, curators, and researchers.

- We strive to cover the field as fully as possible, but our network is more concentrated in Europe, and in the English and French languages, so we expect to have some blind spots. These gaps in terms of coverage also point to long-standing structural imbalances in the mobility field.

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13 Editorial policy: https://on-the-move.org/about/editorial-policy
14 https://on-the-move.org/resources/funding
Usually, we know the principal organiser and the destination for a mobility activity (e.g. a residency centre in Poland), but we do not know who will ultimately become the beneficiary of a programme or opportunity (e.g. a visual artist from Albania). As such, when we look at 'origin' countries or regions this refers to the location of the call's organising entities, and where we are able to map flows, these are flows of organisational and logistical capacity rather than mobility flows of beneficiaries.

The number of beneficiaries, and therefore the scale of programmes, is not captured. So, one call might refer to an opportunity for a single professional to attend a conference, while another might refer to a large-scale programme awarding multiple grants to multiple beneficiaries.

Some other caveats apply for specific classifications but are noted in the text.

While the above points are important to keep in mind, the data in this publication nonetheless aims to provide a close look at shifts in the mobility field to help identify promising areas for qualitative analysis and further research, as well as blank spots that need more support and attention from the field at large.

Geographical regions

For geographical analysis, this report uses the United Nations M49 geoscheme, which organises countries into regions (Africa, Asia, Americas, Europe and Oceania) as well as sub-regions (Central Asia, Eastern Asia, South-eastern Asia, etc.). The relevant countries are listed during the regional breakdowns in the overview section.
Overview

This is now our third Yearbook analysing current trends in cultural mobility. The first, covering activity from 2021, had a special focus on the digital mobility that was then springing up in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. This was followed by a second edition, in 2022, that looked at the topic of environment and sustainability and its growing ubiquity in response to overlapping ecological crises. In both cases, we found genuine excitement for new ways of working across borders, many examples of unusual or thoughtful experiments, but often also an absence of resources to support artists and culture professionals to make changes in how they travel and work.

With the current yearbook we analyse 551 calls for funded mobility opportunities from 2023. Looking back on our two previous themes, we relate them to a third: training and professional development. In a sense training and professional development is everywhere, in both structured and unstructured forms. In 2023, the On the Move website featured 56 calls principally focused on training – though there were many more that fell under another format but had supplemental training activity, whether that was a residency incorporating a short masterclass or a project funding scheme accompanied by mentoring for grantees.

While taking many forms, from skill shares to incubators to workshops, at its core training is about preparing people for the future. It voices the concerns of today and opens a window onto our ideas of what’s coming next. We look at this topic of training in more detail in the second half of this analysis, but first let’s check in on the overall picture for cultural mobility in 2023.

Number of opportunities by mobility type
The share of in-person mobility remained similar to 2022, with hybrid formats remaining popular

Number of opportunities by type
There was relatively little change in the spread of mobility formats versus 2022

Number of opportunities by applicant type
Most calls targeted individual applicants.

Number of opportunities by applicant type
Artists were the primary beneficiaries for mobility opportunities

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14 Cultural Mobility Yearbook 2022: https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/cultural-mobility-yearbook-2022
Digital mobility

After a large drop-off from 2021 to 2022, the overall share of online or hybrid opportunities stayed fairly constant in 2023 – 14%, versus 15.5% in 2022. Digital mobility was organised across regions – with Europe having the smallest share of online or hybrid calls (12.9%) and Americas the highest (25%). Following the pattern of previous years, countries such as United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands were very active in organising online mobility, yet there was still a broad spread of participation – with structures from 42 countries involved as organisers for online or hybrid calls during 2023.

In spite of this, 2023 did see a further reduction in the share of opportunities where activities took place only online or remotely – which fell to 3.4% in 2023 from 6.4% in 2022 (and from a high of 18.5% in 2021). Hybrid work, by contrast, proved its staying power, making up 10.5% of calls in 2023 versus 9.1% in 2022.

Clearly, online work is a necessity for fewer organisers now than was the case during the pandemic, even if for some individuals it is still the key factor that can open the door to their participation. Among the few calls focused on online work, we find several focused on training (which we will come back to in the second section of this chapter) as well as residencies and fellowships which can benefit from longer schedules. In May 2023, for example, a call for Leonardo's Imagination Fellowship offered a nine-month programme of collaboration for practitioners working in 'experimental media', offering a programme 'charting new territory in areas like expanded reality, immersive storytelling, worldbuilding'. In spite of isolated examples, and some measures started during the pandemic which appear to be becoming regular fixtures (such as the OneBeat Virtual programme for musician activists, educators and entrepreneurs), in general purely digital mobility is on the fringes.

Hybrid formats, however, seem to have found their place in the new normal. The most common approach is a longer online/remote working period leading up to a shorter and more intense schedule of in-person activities – an approach that genuinely seems to open new doors for organisers interested in cooperation over longer timeframes. A notable example of this from 2023 was CCA - Canadian Centre for Architecture's 'In the Hurricane, On the Land' research programme, which offered researchers an 18-month engagement with an existing project exploring land-dependent design practices, studded with three in-person workshops in Montreal and other locations. Collaboration often unfolds slowly, but online seminars, discussions and workshops offer a way to set milestones on the way to a common destination.

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17 Leonardo Imagination Fellowship: https://leonardo.info/imagination-fellowship
18 OneBeat Virtual: https://1beat.org/programs/virtual/
Hybrid formats also lend themselves well to experiments with sustainability, and in 2023 there were a number of calls from cooperation projects funded by Creative Europe that connected virtual mobility with the search for new models. One of these was an April 2023 call for the 'sustainable institution artist residency', which invited artists and practitioners to develop a prototype for sustainable exhibition making, and took place over 6 months of remote R&D and mentoring, followed by 6 weeks of in-person residency at one of three partner sites.20

All signs point to hybrid formats being very useful for mobility organisers. In spite of the benefits, the preference for mixed approaches risks losing the accessibility of purely online formats. While there were a few calls in our dataset giving participants a choice, in the majority of hybrid cases both online and in-person activities were compulsory – all or nothing.

Art forms

As in previous years, the Cross-disciplinary category (indicating both calls open to any discipline and ones aimed at interdisciplinary approaches) was the largest, accounting for 34.5% of all calls in 2023. The prevalence of opportunities that cross artistic forms is not so much a trend as a settled reality for the sector, though we can note that online and hybrid opportunities were more likely to be cross-disciplinary (52.6%).

Among individual art forms, the spread of opportunities is quite similar to last year, though with Performing Arts taking a larger share (22.5% against 15% in 2022). In 2023, performing arts calls in our data had an even stronger focus on environment and sustainability – both through large-scale initiatives looking to kickstart experimentation with new models, such as the returning Perform Europe programme,21 or the International Touring and Environmental Responsibility Fund co-organised by funders in England, Denmark and Norway,22 and through targeted projects focusing on our responsibility to the natural world (with examples including calls from the ART4SEA residency focusing on ocean conservation,23 and the PLANT - Performing Life Akademia Network).24

A number of these environment-themed calls also had a relationship to social engagement, framing their activity as envisioning shared futures. Two examples were the Green Streets of Europe project, gathering a partnership of four European festivals for performing arts in public spaces, and putting an emphasis on local relevance and public engagement, and the Hand to Hand project, a cross-sectoral ‘social ecology residency programme’ including work in a champagne house, a paper mill, and a maritime workshop for the renovation of wooden boats.25

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20 The Sustainable Institution: https://www.sustainable-institution.com/
21 Perform Europe: https://performeurope.eu/
23 ART4SEA: https://art4sea.eu/
24 PLANT: https://performinglifeakademianetwork.eu/open-call
22.7% of calls in our dataset were addressed to artists and professionals working in Visual Arts & Design. As usual, residencies were the main form of mobility activity, making up around half of all calls with the Visual Arts & Design label. While the residency has evolved to encompass a number of virtual and hybrid approaches, this experimentation has been less pronounced in the visual arts. Of the 79 residencies addressed to visual arts practitioners that we recorded in 2023, only 2 were in a hybrid format – the University of Johannesburg’s artist in residence programme, which offered a choice between online/remote and in-person occupancy, and the Hydromedia ‘Seeing With Water’ residency, which included two phases of on-site and remote work. None were online only. In general then, calls in this category were very focused on in-person work – and quite often on site-responsive work, with calls in this line including a commission for a large-scale piece of land art for Kalorama Park in Australia, and an invitation to create work for the surroundings of a former psychiatric hospital in Dikemark, Norway.

Music & Sound, which was a label for 10% of calls in 2023, is structurally quite similar to Performing Arts – with a spread of mobility opportunities over training calls, opportunities for meetings and exchange, and moments to present work. Also in common with Performing Arts it has been very concerned with greening touring practice, notably supported, in late 2023, by a call from the new European project LIVEMX, which will provide grants to music organisations to work on a number of key topics, including ‘developing ecological solutions adapted to the live music sector’ and growing digital means of distribution and audience engagement.

Among the other art form categories, activities in Literature (4.3% of calls) were virtually all in-person, focused on residencies (71% of Literature calls), and on opportunities that weren’t linked to a specific topic or theme. Digital / New Media once again lent itself well to online/hybrid approaches, and as one would expect engaged heavily with technology as a theme and medium. In some cases this meant providing unique conditions for artists, such as a call from the SHARESPACE project to create work for the Deep Space 8K immersive XR environment at the Ars Electronica Center. In 2023, there were more Architecture calls than in previous years, though the number was still relatively small – 20 throughout the year. These took a number of forms, ranging from pure research activities to very hands-on projects. Of the latter, an architecture / urban planning residency organised by Malý Berlín / City of Trnava in Slovakia stands out: it invited applications for projects that would be developed in collaboration with the city’s head architect, and realised with the resources of their department.

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26 University of Johannesburg’s artist in residence programme: https://arts.uj.ac.za/uj-artists-in-residence-call-for-applications/
27 Hydromedia: https://www.hydromedia.org
30 LIVEMX: https://livemx.eu
31 SHARESPACE: https://sharespace.eu
The regional picture remains quite similar in 2023 as in the previous year, though the reduction in online formats continued. In 2023, there were 79 calls that involved online space as a ‘destination’ – down from 104 in 2022 and 179 in 2021. In general, interregional collaboration is again somewhat limited, and few calls had mobility destinations in multiple regions.

As in previous years, Oceania has limited presence in our data, but we can take a closer look at the other regions.
In terms of mobility destinations, South Africa was the most prominent African country, followed by Egypt and Tanzania. While overall there were mobility opportunities for 13 countries, the majority of these countries only had one or two calls.

The left table shows the relation between where calls were organised and where their mobility was destined.

**Northern Africa:** Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Western Sahara.


(See: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49)
During 2023, a fifth of calls involving mobility organisers or destinations in Africa were in hybrid formats. These opportunities were predominantly training initiatives and included the Gender Work programme for music industry professionals, organised by Music In Africa Foundation in partnership with Scènes Australes, which targeted event production managers in Africa and the Indian Ocean and combined an online music business module with an in-person event production training in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.33

30% of calls relating to Africa were for projects co-funded by the EU. Several of these involved mobility between Africa and Europe – with the Common Stories project, for example, organising two 8-week itinerant laboratories for performing arts practitioners that concentrated on underrepresented practices and public space. The first of these labs took place between Portugal, France, Mozambique and Belgium, and the second between France, Sweden, Egypt and Portugal.34

However, a few opportunities supported by the ACP-EU Culture programme were dedicated to Africa-Africa mobility. These included the Route de l’Artiste en Afrique Centrale project, organised by Yaro (Congo), Our children our future (Cameroon), and Le Récafé (Chad), which offered grants for cross-border collaborations, and the Uvumbuzi Music Residency, organised by Santuri East Africa and Ajabu Ajabu in Kenya and Tanzania.

At the start of the year, On the Move published a call for a cultural mobility developers workshop focused on South Mediterranean countries – Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Malta, Italy (Sicily, Lampedusa, Pelagie Islands), and Spain (Ceuta, Melilla). The workshop itself took place in Tunis in May, and offered training on how to better access existing mobility resources, with participants awarded a follow-up dissemination grant to pass the knowledge they gained to their wider community.35

Alongside promoting awareness of existing resources, there were also signs of a desire to open new mobility routes in Africa and rethink terms of international collaboration. In July the Deconfining project, which aims to create new models of cooperation between Europe and Africa, ran a call for video artist residencies in Poland and Tanzania, while in September 2023 the Commission de l’océan Indien, with funding from l’Agence française de développement, launched the first cycle of a new funding scheme, AléViní, providing mobility funding for individuals and organisations in Comoros Union, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Mozambique (countries which previously had few opportunities for mobility, and particularly for travel within the region).36

Aside from this, another small trend in our data was calls related to markets, fairs and showcases, including D-CAF Festival in Egypt, MASA - Market for Abidjan Performing Arts in Côte d’Ivoire, and the Music Imbizo music and film conference/festival in South Africa.37

Intercontinental cooperation is primarily between Africa and Europe. OneBeat in the United States of America, launched OneBeat Ghana as ‘the pilot version of a new model of OneBeat Abroad exchange, focused on creative entrepreneurship and strategies to address issues faced by global musicians’.38
Our 2023 data, the United States of America was by far the most common destination for the Americas region, followed by Canada. In Latin America and the Caribbean there were just a handful of calls for Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Barbados and Jamaica.

The left table shows the relation between where calls were organised and where their mobility was destined.

**Latin America and the Caribbean**: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guiana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela.

**Northern America**: Canada, Greenland, United States of America.

(See: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49)
As usual, the Americas had a larger focus on visual arts than other regions, driven by foundations, universities and other large institutions – which in turn leads to a greater focus on curation and research, with fewer opportunities to present finished work (calls from festivals and venues are relatively scarce). One example from 2023, which also reflects a regional focus on technology and scientific collaboration, was a call for the MSUFCU Arts Power Up residency programme, which invited artists to work within the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams at Michigan State University. While fairly small in number, such opportunities tend to provide good financial conditions and support for beneficiaries (with the Power Up residency also providing up to 1,000 USD per month for childcare costs).\(^\text{39}\)

In Latin America and the Caribbean there were fewer institutional players, but similarly an emphasis on curation and research. In May, CIMAM offered travel grants for its annual conference, this year in Argentina, while in July the UK-based Black Curatorial launched its Fly Me Out Fund for Black Curators and Visual Artists, supporting mobility between Barbados, Jamaica and the UK.\(^\text{40}\)

There were relatively few Americas calls that involved outgoing mobility from the Americas to other world regions, but a few signs of projects that were looking to make new international connections. One was a call for three Performa Baltic Fellowships – a collaboration between Performa in New York and the Estonian Contemporary Art Development Center, the Rupert programme in Lithuania, and the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art. Selected fellows from the Baltic region were awarded a three-month intensive placement with Performa in New York.\(^\text{41}\)

Another interesting example of intercontinental cooperation was the Dialekt project, a Nordic residency exchange that extended to Canada/Quebec, and invited interdisciplinary and sound artists, audiovisual performers, and experimental electronic composers and musicians to undertake three weeks of residency divided between centres in Struer, Malmö, and Montreal.\(^\text{42}\)

Taking another view on geographical divisions, and on what constitutes a region, the Momus & Forge project called in February for international indigenous art critics to join a residency considering ‘the breadth of global Indigenous art criticism and cultural protocols’ by focusing on ‘river- and lake-shores, springs and estuaries, as storied places of local Indigenous nations as well as sites of reciprocity and entanglement between many living beings’.\(^\text{43}\)

\(^{39}\) Power Up residency: https://research.msu.edu/news/open-call-msufcu-arts-power-arts-residency-program
\(^{40}\) Fly Me Out Fund: https://www.blackcuratorial.co/flymeout
\(^{41}\) Performa Baltic Fellowships: https://rupert.lt/performa-biennial-baltic-fellows-open-call/
\(^{42}\) Dialekt project: https://on-the-move.org/news/dialekt-cali-nordic-residency-exchange-denmark-sweden-canada
\(^{43}\) Momus & Forge: https://momus.ca/momus-emerging-critics-residency/
Asia

Number of calls by opportunity type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity Type</th>
<th>Number of Calls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residencies</td>
<td>29 (44.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings &amp; Collaboration</td>
<td>12 (18.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenting Work</td>
<td>6 (9.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissions &amp; Tenders</td>
<td>5 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Funding</td>
<td>5 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>5 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowships</td>
<td>3 (4.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of calls by art form or discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art Form or Discipline</th>
<th>Number of Calls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross-disciplinary</td>
<td>23 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts &amp; Design</td>
<td>22 (26.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>16 (19.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital / New Media</td>
<td>12 (18.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music &amp; Sound</td>
<td>12 (18.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>4 (4.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>4 (4.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Heritage</td>
<td>1 (1.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Destinations for calls involving mobility to Asia

In the northern parts of Western Asia, mobility is primarily characterised by connection with EU programmes. For the Middle Eastern countries such as United Arab Emirates, Palestine and Saudi Arabia, government programmes and large institutions like Sharjah Art Foundation in UAE are more prominent. Southern Asia is largely a blank spot in our data, with only India having activity in 2023. Finally, in South-eastern and Eastern Asia, Japan, South Korea and Singapore continue to be active, though joined in 2023 by activity in Vietnam, Indonesia, and Taiwan.

Organiser to destination flow for sub-regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Region</th>
<th>Central Asia</th>
<th>Eastern Asia</th>
<th>Other Regions</th>
<th>South-eastern Asia</th>
<th>Southern Asia</th>
<th>Western Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Asia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Regions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-eastern Asia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Asia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The left table shows the relation between where calls were organised and where their mobility was destined.

Eastern Asia: China, Hong Kong S.A.R., Japan, Macao S.A.R., North Korea, Mongolia, South Korea, Taiwan.

South-eastern Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam.

Southern Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.

Western Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Georgia, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

(See: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49)
The Asian region covers a number of divergent situations in terms of cultural mobility. For the Middle Eastern countries, government programmes and large institutions like Sharjah Art Foundation in UAE are more prominent.

15% of opportunities involving mobility organisers or destinations in Asia in 2023 were for hybrid mobility – similar to the 2022 figure of 14.5%. Reflecting the wider trend, opportunities that were exclusively for online or remote activity fell from 12.7% in 2022 to 2% in 2023. In the hybrid category, examples included the Common Futures audio storytelling lab, organised by Reimagine Your City, which featured a programme of online mentoring and group work leading up to two offline exchanges in Germany and Moldova, and the regular Asian Performing Arts Camp, organised by Tokyo Festival Farm, which followed a similar structure of online lectures and sharings before a one-week stay in Tokyo.

While opportunities for funded mobility within the Asia region remain limited, in 2023 On the Move member Mekong Cultural Hub continued its work connecting its priority countries of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam with three calls, all in hybrid formats, for various collaborations within the Mekong region and between practitioners and their local communities. In December, the project ADAM - Asia Discovers Asia Meeting for Contemporary Performance released a call for a two-phase lab – for the first time both taking place in Taiwan (its usual location) and travelling out to Bangkok, Thailand for a thematic programme looking at sites, places, communities and neighbourhoods in order to ‘reimagine how the notion of history has shaped where we live [and to] question ways of sharing common grounds’.

Sharjah Art Foundation: https://www.sharjahart.org/
Reimagine Your City: https://reimaginecity.org/audiolab/
Tokyo Festival Farm: https://tokyo-festival.jp/en/tf_farm/
Mekong Cultural Hub: https://www.mekongculturalhub.org/
Europe was the region with the highest level of mobility activity. While a small number of countries in Western and Northern Europe accounted for a large proportion of this, there was mobility across the region – driven partly by EU funding schemes and Creative Europe cooperation projects.

The left table shows the relation between where calls were organised and where their mobility was destined.

**Eastern Europe:** Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine.

**Northern Europe:** Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom.

**Southern Europe:** Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Kosovo, Malta, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain.

**Western Europe:** Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Switzerland.

(See: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49)
Europe remains the region most active in our data, reflecting higher levels of cultural funding for mobility. In 2023, 84.6% of all calls either had an organiser based in Europe or supported mobility to the region.

Looked at as a whole, the European mobility field is quite diverse in terms of organisers and mobility flows. In 2023, 36 countries were destinations for mobility activities. Large centres of activity do appear within this picture, with Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the UK acting as destinations for almost half of all calls for the region, but this is in line with their combined population size (a little less than half of the European population).

European mobility is also distinguished by a high level of interconnection between its sub-regions – Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western Europe – in terms of collaboration and the flow of organisational resources. A major factor in these internal flows is funding from the EU, and cooperation projects in particular play an important role in driving interregional cooperation. In 2023, 30.9% of all calls in the Europe region were co-funded by European programmes such as Creative Europe, Horizon, Erasmus+ or special programmes. This is a large rise from the figure for last year (16.1%), reflecting a new cycle of funding for cooperation projects, as well as the continuation of the Culture Moves Europe programme. 49

While it launched in 2022, Culture Moves Europe had its first full year in 2023. Alongside the individual strand of the programme, 2023 saw the first calls from residency hosts selected by Culture Moves Europe. A few of these organisers were mobility ‘regulars’ that have appeared in OTM’s coverage before, but a number of calls were from organisations who had taken advantage of Culture Moves Europe to build new capacity, often bringing artists and culture professionals to rural or ‘peripheral’ areas. Examples in this vein included a residency in the harbour of San Giovanni Li Cuti in Catania, Sicily, organised by the cultural association Salmasta, and the Iancura residency programme, organised by amanei in Salina, one of seven islands in the Aeolian archipelago.50 While the majority of calls were open to all residents of Creative Europe countries, a few also used the Culture Moves Europe funding to encourage less travelled mobility paths – for instance, Circolando’s residency in Portugal for artists from the Western Balkans, and the ‘(illa)’ residency in Menorca, organised by Casa d’Artistes, which was aimed at ‘visual artists from the western Mediterranean islands that are not part of Spain (Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, the Tuscan archipelago, Phlegraean Islands, etc.).’51

15.5% of calls with a European organiser or destination had a thematic focus on environment and sustainability. A large part of this activity was again driven by EU programmes, given an extra push by the inclusion of ‘greening Creative Europe’ as a cross-cutting priority for projects to address. Another large-scale theme has been technology. Alongside large dedicated structures like Ars Electronica,52 2023 saw a proliferation of projects working with the subject – including MODINA (Movement, Digital Intelligence and Interactive Audience), which targeted duos of dance artists and creative technologists,53 and tekhnē, which organised residencies in France, Poland and Belgium to ‘explore the emancipatory potential of technology in music and sound art’.54

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49 Culture Moves Europe: https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/creative-europe-culture-strand/culture-moves-europe
Iancura residency: https://www.amanei.com/open-call-iancura
52 Ars Electronica: https://ars.electronica.art/news/en/
53 MODINA: https://modina.eu/
54 tekhnē: https://tekhnē.website/?partner=tekhnē&typen=blogs
Training and professional development

Bootcamp, incubator, mentoring programme, skills workshop, talent development, peer learning, co-learning, masterclass, support scheme, study tour, laboratory, leadership programme... opportunities for training and professional development come in a number of guises. While the exact terminology might not be important, the variety reflects different structures and processes, as well as different views on how knowledge is formed, what it is, and how to pass it on. Underlying this are different visions of what the purpose of training is in an international context, and of what is needed for the future.

In this section we take a closer look at the 56 calls that appeared on the On the Move website in 2023 that were labelled as ‘training’ opportunities. There were many others that involved some element of training within their overall programme (for example, a one-month residency incorporating a two-day masterclass), but here we focus on this small subset of calls that had continuing professional development as their main activity.

Organisers and target groups

Training calls in our data were organised by a number of entities, varying from foundations to festivals to advocacy organisations, with the common feature that virtually none of them were specialised in, or solely focused on, training. Rather, they were organisations delivering a range of activities, in which the training initiative was a discrete project.

Around a third (33.9%) of calls training calls received EU funding – mainly through Creative Europe cooperation projects (we recorded 8 in 2023) and networks (with Circostrada, ENCC, Aerowaves, Trans Europe Halles and On the Move all organising initiatives). Perhaps surprisingly, Erasmus+ funding does not feature heavily (with only one call in September for the Youth Peace Ambassadors Network’s We Make Culture project).

Outside of EU sources, other funding bodies and institutions such as Roberto Cimetta Fund, Institut français, Music in Africa Foundation, and British Council made up a good portion of activity. Presenting bodies like Resurrexit Festival, La Biennale di Venezia, and BEK - Bergen Centre for Electronic Arts accounted for a few opportunities, tending to offer training linked to artistic skills and technique.

66 Youth Peace Ambassadors Network, We Make Culture: https://youthpeaceambassadors.medium.com/open-call-for-participants-we-make-culture-e1aa5f57758f
Compared to other categories of calls, training opportunities were more likely to be open to culture professionals (37.5% versus a global average of 28.1%), while around half were open to artists. In terms of the activities offered during the training itself, we find a fairly balanced split: 51% of calls focused on artistic training, 43.1% on administrative matters, and 5.9% a mix of both.

Around 60% of training calls had an art form focus – with Performing Arts and Music & Sound making up a greater proportion than in other types of calls, and Visual Arts taking a lower share.

Age restrictions appear in eligibility for 26.8% of training calls – with 35 years being the most common cut-off. Only a handful of calls tied eligibility to other individual characteristics, such as gender – though among them were the Bridjing project,\(^ {56}\) organised between Albania, France and Tunisia, which ran a career take-off programme for emerging womxn artists in electronic music; Music In Africa Foundation’s Gender@Work training for female music industry professionals;\(^ {57}\) and the Roberto Cimetta Fund’s Ready Steady Go programme,\(^ {58}\) which focused on ‘remote areas’. Such examples aside, eligibility was most usually determined by art form, professional role, country of residence, and the alignment of the applicant’s interests with the topic or vision of the training project.

On this last point, indeed many training opportunities come with a mission statement. The aims of training programmes were more often expressed in terms of sector-wide impacts than individual benefits: ‘The aim is to foster the sustainable development of Europe’s cultural and creative sectors, empowering local communities and driving transformative change within the industry.’\(^ {59}\) Or else from a social justice perspective: ‘By shining a light on these stories and creating a wide-reaching platform for local talent, the aim is to contribute to a shift in the power balance towards equality within the cocoa supply chain.’\(^ {60}\)

This broadness of vision partly comes from On the Move’s editorial policy: open calls listed on the website are usually one-off initiatives, fitting around formal education opportunities, ongoing courses, and of course paid workshops/masterclasses.\(^ {61}\) They tend to be short, uncertified, and represent a

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\(^{57}\) Music In Africa Foundation, Gender@Work: [https://www.musicinafrica.net/genderatwork](https://www.musicinafrica.net/genderatwork)

\(^{58}\) Roberto Cimetta Fund, Ready Steady Go: [https://www.cimettafund.org/en/](https://www.cimettafund.org/en/)


\(^{61}\) [https://on-the-move.org/about/editorial-policy](https://on-the-move.org/about/editorial-policy)
thematic angle rather than comprehensive coverage. They fill a gap as perceived by the organiser, or the funder, and can sometimes have the feeling of a 'crisis response' – a mix of training and community gathering around a pressing issue of the time.

For an applicant, broad statements can be potentially intriguing, even resonant or inspiring, but also somewhat vague. What exactly are they getting into?

Skills & knowledge

Whereas accredited training programmes often have a curriculum and some form of examination, calls in our data were usually more open-ended and flexible.

Generally the emphasis was on soft skills, contextual knowledge, reflection, and discussion: not learning how to do something, so much as gathering ideas that might reorient or enrich a current practice, with the actual material, the substance, of the training programme arising from the interaction between participants.

As such, calls in our dataset often preferred peer learning over sessions led by a trainer. Sometimes this was expressed as a rejection of hierarchical formats themselves, as was the case for the 'reciprocal educational process' proposed by WHW Akademija in Croatia: 'Its programmes encourage participants to coproduce critical content based on how knowledge is produced and questioned through the poetic, the physical, the material, and the eco-social.' Or for the five-day Bodies of Work intensive organised by BJCEM – Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean and Dance House Leftkosia: 'For the second edition of BOW – Bodies of Work, the programme will renounce the hierarchical organisation of learning and training spaces between mentors and mentees to shift towards a horizontal situation of practice sharing and communal physical thinking, aiming to generate reflections around pivotal questions of our contemporary world.'

Reflecting such horizontal approaches, collective work was the norm in our data, with 64.3% of calls involving group activities such as workshops, peer learning, or group discussion. While training was mostly conducted behind closed doors – with only 12.5% of calls involving an opportunity to present or showcase to an outside audience – 23.2% of calls did involve exploration of a local scene, site visits, or networking outside the training cohort.

37.5% of training calls described themselves as offering 'mentoring'. In some cases, this was a small part of the training offer, and almost a commodity – mentoring was offered without information on who the mentors were, their experiences, or skills. However, there are also programmes like the long-running Forecast mentoring scheme that situate it as a core activity: for Forecast, selected applicants choose one of six named mentors during application and work with them closely over several months to develop a creative project. If nothing else, the

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Activities and resources offered by training opportunities</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff exchange, work placement or shadowing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity to present output to outside audience</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mentoring</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Lectures and discussions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Group work</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Exploration of a local scene</strong></td>
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62 WHW Akademija: https://akademija.whw.hr/about
63 BJCEM – Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean and Dance House Leftkosia, Bodies of Work #2: https://www.bjcem.org/bodies-of-work-2023/
64 Forecast: https://forecast-platform.com/
prevalence of mentoring among opportunities speaks to the need for tailored training that doubles as project development, with participants able to get support to work through problems in their activities.

The conceptual frameworks of training programmes were varied, but as one might guess environment and sustainability was a key topic – with programmes treating this topic including the Prince Claus Mentorship Awards\(^65\) (focused on cultural and artistic responses to environmental change) and Collab 4 HY Sustain CCI’s Innovation Incubator for European Organisations\(^66\) (looking at sustainability in processes of collaboration). In the cultural heritage sector (and curation more broadly) decolonialisation was a notable focus, addressed by programmes such as Reimagining Heritage Archives and Museums Today/Tomorrow,\(^67\) which brought together young professionals from South Africa, Lesotho, and Malawi for a convening in Cape Town alongside an ongoing mentoring programme, with the goal of developing ‘a new relational ethic between Southern Africa and France’, and the Académie des Traces,\(^68\) which invited European and African cultural heritages to a spring school in Berlin to ‘understand, question and change the past, present and future of colonial legacies’.

Training courses covering ‘hard’ skills, such as a defined artistic technique, or an administrative skill like bookkeeping, were rarer in our data and generally a little better covered outside of Europe – perhaps reflecting different assumptions about the existing experience of participants, and different ideas of what is needed. Here common areas covered included accounting, applying for funding, and management. One project covering most of these bases was a June call for African Culture Fund’s Cultural Management Bootcamp,\(^69\) a one-week programme spanning four modules (Personal Development, Digitalization and Creative Innovation, Financial Management and Fundraising, and Cultural Entrepreneurship Maaya - CEM), and granting a final Kôrè-Qualité professional aptitude certificate.

Online and offline

In 2021, 60% of training calls in our data used online or hybrid formats. This fell to 22% in 2022, then rose again to 41.5% in 2023. Within this we see a large preference for hybrid rather than online-only formats, which in 2023 made up 30.2% of all training calls. In common with hybrid residency programmes and other types of opportunity, training calls involving digital mobility tended to organise their online activity first, as a preparation or induction for the in-person activity – but also took advantage of hybrid flexibility to test or implement training in different environments (at home and away). A good example of such phased training was a call in July for Art Exchange’s Moving

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\(^{65}\) Prince Claus Mentorship Awards: [https://princeclausfund.org/prince-claus-mentorship-awards](https://princeclausfund.org/prince-claus-mentorship-awards)
\(^{66}\) Collab 4 HySust: [https://deuscci.eu/collab-4-hysust/](https://deuscci.eu/collab-4-hysust/)
\(^{67}\) Reimagining Heritage Archives and Museums Today/Tomorrow: [https://todaytomorrow.iqoqo.org/](https://todaytomorrow.iqoqo.org/)
\(^{68}\) Académie des Traces: [https://academiedestraces.com/](https://academiedestraces.com/)
\(^{69}\) African Culture Fund, Cultural Management Bootcamp: [https://www.africanculturefund.net/en/call-for-applications-boot-camp-4-cultural-management/](https://www.africanculturefund.net/en/call-for-applications-boot-camp-4-cultural-management/)
Image programme\textsuperscript{70} for curatorial professional development, targeted at early to mid-career visual arts curators from Sub-Saharan Africa. This began with a monthly online workshop series during autumn 2023, led to a week-long trip to the UK for networking, tours, and visits, and concluded with a grant for participating curators to realise a final exhibition back in their home countries at the end of the year.

While rarer, online-only programmes offer potential for greater reach, and perhaps appeal to larger institutions with the resources to develop course materials (as in the case of initiatives like the UNESCO-Transcultura programme).\textsuperscript{71} One interesting example in this area was Weaving a Narrative,\textsuperscript{72} a collaboration between Übersee Museum in Germany and the Pacific Virtual Museum Project in New Zealand that offered a series of three online workshops training participants to make creative use of digital archives in cultural heritage – a case of the medium of training aligning perfectly with the content. In general, however, while many projects made use of digital technology to deliver their activities, only 8.9% had a focus on training in digital skills/tech as such.

\section*{Training as work}

As with other opportunities in the mobility sector, the question of remuneration and fair pay is a recurring one. Is training work to be paid or its own reward?

32.1% of training calls in our data provided some form of stipend or grant to pay the beneficiary for the time spent on the training activity. For in-person calls this figure was 25.8%, and for hybrid calls it was 43.8%. (For purely online calls, On the Move generally only lists opportunities that provide some form of payment for time.)

Paid or not, training opportunities ask participants to invest their time. Where calls involved in-person activity, in a majority of cases this in-person commitment took place over 1 week or less (median 6.5 days). Online time commitments were usually less precisely defined within calls themselves, but more likely to be spread out and flexible.

Only 5.7% of training calls offered to cover access costs. One of these was Bradford Producing Hub,\textsuperscript{73} which in a November call for its international artist exchange programme offered bursaries in the form of a claimable session fee (‘a contribution towards your time to help you attend when you might otherwise be working’), as well as a separate access budget (covering ‘things like disability support, sign language interpretation, childcare, or digital access support’).

\section*{Training for the future}

When we look across the training offer, and ask what it says about the needs of the sector, it seems that what is mainly needed is time (perhaps unpaid) to reflect on things, opportunities to talk to each other and exchange, a little sprinkling of hard production skills, and not much focus on artistic technique.

\textsuperscript{70} Art Exchange, Moving Image: https://www.artexchangemovingimage.uk
\textsuperscript{71} UNESCO-Transcultura: https://on-the-move.org/news/unesco-transcultura-cultural-grant-writing-course-caribbean-artists-and-professionals-online
\textsuperscript{72} Weaving a Narrative: https://www.uebersee-museum.de/en/weaving-a-narrative/
\textsuperscript{73} Bradford Producing Hub, International Artist Exchange: https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/funding-opportunity/bph-x-bd25-international-artist-exchange-programme/
What is missing from the picture? Overall, the training calls collected by On the Move had an emphasis on emerging and mid-career stages, and little about late career training or retraining. The training initiatives we did identify focused on layering on top of existing practices rather than cutting a new course.

Direct engagement with internationalisation as a topic, and as an area of explicit training, was mainly absent – perhaps with an assumption that internationalisation happens on its own if you get people from different countries in the room together. For better or worse, there was also little cross-sectoral activity or efforts to bridge sectors through training (an exception was the Cultural Relations Platform’s Global Cultural Relations Programme,\(^4\) which in 2023 opened for the first time to non-arts participants working in the climate change and environmental issues).

Opportunities that offered some form of artistic training were generally artist-led, but seldom artist organised. One notable exception was Sudkulturfonds’ call in September for workshop proposals from artists ‘keen to share [their] skills with others’,\(^5\) which invited them to apply for a grant to run a four-week online workshop of their own design.

Opportunities of this kind are rare, but hint at a further step in the devolution of training: if there is already a focus on horizontal approaches, and on non-hierarchical modes of work, then giving individuals more say in how training is not just conducted but organised and designed gives them greater voice in shaping the future of the sector.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

**John Ellingsworth** works as a writer and editor in the cultural field. As an editor, he has worked on projects and publications for Kulturrådet (Sweden), IETM - international network for contemporary performing arts (Belgium), Dansehallerne (Denmark), ELIA - European network for higher arts education (the Netherlands), Flanders Department of Culture, Youth and Media (Belgium), EDN - European Dancehouse Network (Spain), and others. Working as a data analyst, he co-authored the 2022-2024 editions of On the Move’s Cultural Mobility Yearbook.

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Complex Challenges Require New Skills

by Birgitta Persson
Each spring, I teach international collaboration for emerging culture managers at Kulturverkstan in Gothenburg, Sweden. The content differs every year since I build the lecture based on the questions and interests the students have and they vary from year to year. However, one question keeps coming back each time: ‘How do I get to work with international projects, and how can I find partners for my project idea?’ My answer to them is short: through building relationships. International collaboration for artists and culture professionals has always been about building and nurturing relationships. I usually tell the students to let their curiosity guide them and to participate in international conferences, join international networks, do study trips, etc. A collaborative and trusting relationship starts with being curious about the other and open about who you are.

My generation of cultural professionals in Europe has thrived from the growing opportunities of international collaboration project funding, study opportunities, and mobility grants in the EU since the early nineties. For many of us, international networks have been key to our careers in one way or the other. To learn and exchange with colleagues and peers in an international network dedicated to cultural heritage, music, performing arts, visual arts, or architecture has and still is pivotal for building the relationships and understanding of different realities needed for collaboration. The network Trans Europe Halles, which I joined in 1994 (on behalf of the cultural centre Mejeriet in Lund, Sweden), came to define me over the years, not only as a professional, but also as a person. It is still powerful. The other week I met two younger colleagues from Kosovo who said that attending their first network meeting was like coming home: ‘For the first time I didn’t feel strange or alone, I finally met people who think like me.’

But times have changed. As cultural professionals, we need to extend our abilities and sharpen and adapt our skill sets to better be able to contribute to addressing the current challenges we face. From my viewpoint, there are five aspects for international collaboration to consider, which I will briefly touch upon below:

1/ The role of arts and culture in the green transition
2/ A seat at the table of interdisciplinary collaboration
3/ Supporting methods and approaches
4/ The digital shift
5/ Cultural sensitivity

The role of arts and culture in the green transition

The first and most profound aspect concerns the role of the cultural and creative sector in addressing the climate crisis. There is a growing effort in the cultural and creative sector to decarbonise – whether through shifting to sustainable modes of transportation for touring companies, enabling sustainable mobility for festival audiences, shifting to renewable energy, or making other changes. Several organisations such as Julie’s Bicycle are taking significant steps in mobilising the sector to take action. As arts and culture organisations we also raise awareness about the climate crisis and inspire people to change behaviour through artistic work and events. This is all great and should of course be pursued and intensified. But cultural professionals can also work with the very root cause of the climate crisis: our flawed relationship with the living planet. This is a relationship crisis.
between ourselves, others, the environment, and past and future generations, as Karen O’Brien, professor of sociology at Oslo university, puts it. We cannot bring about change by focusing only on socio-economic structures and technical solutions. For a change to take place, it needs to affect both our outer and inner reality. We also need to develop our cognitive, emotional, and social abilities, skills, and capacities to care for the living: so-called transformative capacities.

This is promising for the arts, as we possess expertise in many transformative skills and capacities. Artistic, cultural, and spiritual perspectives can catalyse and strengthen the link between inner and outer transformation, between awareness and action. This perspective, known as existential sustainability, originates from Lund University in Sweden. Arts and culture can empower us to engage deeply with ourselves, others, the world, and our era, fostering meaning, purpose, and connection. They enable us to create and reinvent ourselves, our identities, and the world. For instance, understanding isn’t solely cognitive; it can also be emotional or experiential, involving our senses and interactions with the physical world. We can understand something because it moves us emotionally, or because we encounter and discover it with our body, our senses, touching it as matter. To be existentially sustainable, we need to recognise all these dimensions. I also believe that we might know something cognitively, but that we do not realise it until we have connected emotionally and or physically to it.

It is a challenge and opportunity for cultural professionals to elaborate how to convey, demonstrate, and translate the way that arts and culture can be one of several pillars in the green transformation. We need to continue to stress culture’s positive impact on health, jobs, innovation, the economy, local development, learning, etc., but I would argue that fundamentally arts and culture bring us in contact with, and into resonance with, ourselves, others, and the living planet. This is essential; it is not icing on the cake or nice entertainment for break time. Our work is key to the behavioural change we need to see in the world.

A seat at the table of interdisciplinary collaboration

The second aspect for international collaboration is about the importance of cultural and creative expertise in interdisciplinary collaboration. The type of challenges we are up against – the climate crisis, social, economical and geopolitical tensions and wars, as well as the fast-paced digital shift – demand that we engage in international collaboration beyond our disciplines and likeminded peers and networks. These challenges and crises are so complex that expertise across disciplines, sectors, and borders is necessary.

At a European level, incentives from funders and policymakers are already quite strong when we look at new types of European funding, residency opportunities, and policies. There is, for example, emerging recognition of the cultural and creative sectors in other policy areas such as urban development, innovation, etc. While culture professionals increasingly have opportunities to engage, education and academia are falling behind. Universities generally fail to equip students with the skills for deep interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration. Many artists and cultural managers lack training in articulating their relevance in cross-innovation and development. Typically, artistic and creative input is only sought after technological, economic, and structural aspects of an issue have been extensively deliberated, and strategies formulated. Artists and creatives are brought in to enhance plans, making them more engaging, aesthetically pleasing, communicative, and appealing.
to citizens. This is too late; creative and artistic competences and perspectives are needed right from the outset of a process – during analysis of an issue, problem definition, and the initial design stages.

A successful example of placing cultural competence at the centre of the green transformation is Storkriktet (The Storch Kingdom), the UNESCO biosphere reserve candidacy in southern Sweden. It might become the first biosphere area in the world where the cultural dimension is defined as one of the four sustainability pillars. Culture is now a strategic key for how the biosphere can be a model area for the green transition. This is the result of ten years of conceptual and artistic work in the area combined with persistent advocacy by a local cultural NGO.

To successfully participate in cross-collaboration, we need to make ourselves visible, relevant, and bring fresh perspectives to the table. It is crucial to formulate how our skills and experiences from the creative and cultural sector are relevant. Since our terminology might not always be familiar, we should be able to translate, provide examples, use metaphors and images. After all, storytelling should come naturally to cultural professionals, shouldn’t it?

Regardless, it takes certain skills to work and understand the diverse logics and drives of others – tech companies, real estate companies, public institutions, urban planners, or whoever else is involved. Working at the intersection of the public sector, the private sector, academia, and civil society is demanding but highly rewarding and impactful when successful. It is paramount to understand and acknowledge the diverse roles, driving forces, and shifting conditions for those involved. It helps to have an ecosystem view where you focus on understanding the interdependencies between the different actors, identify common interests, and seek potential for sharing resources.

To place yourself at the table of interdisciplinary collaboration might be easier on an international level first. Having the experience of a cross-sectoral collaboration on an international level is likely to give you the credibility and mandate to move things in your own city.

Supporting methods and approaches

‘Please don’t put me in a group with a museum curator from Stockholm and a theatre director from Dortmund, I will get so depressed,’ the theatre producer from Athens said with a sigh. She was not at all critical about her colleagues from the Northern hemisphere. But she knew that the conditions for creating and producing art are so different in Sweden and Germany compared to her own situation. The exchange would stay on a general level and not be as practical as she’d wish. I was assigned to do research interviewing cultural professionals managing independent cultural centres around Europe with the objective to map their professional development needs.

In the design of the professional development scheme that followed, we decided to focus on exchange around the Mediterranean instead of all of Europe. Mainly because cultural operators in Southern Europe have fewer opportunities, both for professional development compared to their colleagues in Northern and Western Europe and for doing international networking in their own region. Setting up a peer-to-peer professional development programme for cultural operators around the Mediterranean addressed both these discrepancies. At the end of the programme, participants were very grateful for the intra-regional networking resulting in new relationships, exchanges, and contacts.
Of all the different methods and teaching techniques I have used for professional development in international settings, the Action Learning method has been by far the most successful. It is also the method that most people have said brought them not only insights but new relationships, perspectives, and self-confidence. At its core, it is very simple: in Action Learning\(^{78}\) (developed by Reg Revans in the UK), the individual is the expert on their own case or dilemma. Often, we think that we are helpful when we can quickly provide good advice, tips, or share a story from our own experience. In Action Learning we ask the participants to postpone all of this and instead fully listen to the one who is sharing a problem or challenge they are dealing with. By only asking questions the issue holder can consider the problem from various perspectives. This strengthens their capacity and confidence to deal with the problem. When we as peers only listen and ask questions, we put all our attention on our colleagues. We forget ourselves and our agenda for some time. Within a very short time span, this can create a very focused, open, and trusting atmosphere in a group. I consider it an excellent method for peer-to-peer learning, especially in international settings.

What I want to highlight is that a lot can be achieved by connecting with people in our proximity. Sometimes we have a greater need for intra-regional collaboration with neighbouring countries than with someone on another continent. Sometimes listening to the person next to you and using methods that stimulate trust-building conversations is more effective than mingling at big conferences.

### The digital shift

Someone wrote on X on the topic of Artificial Intelligence: ‘Humans doing the hard work while the robots are writing poetry and painting is not the future I wanted.’ If we let the robots do all the creative work, who then are the humans and who are the robots? These are fundamental questions of an ethical and humanistic character that we cannot let tech companies decide on their own. AI is also affecting our sector in the most profound ways. Obviously, it is a tool that can be very interesting for artistic production. Only last week I went to experience my first live performance with an AI as one of the improvisors on stage, and afterwards couldn’t resist trying out the rave party with sounds mixed by a DJ and AI. I still haven’t figured out what I experienced, it was both fascinating and unsettling.

It is also obvious that the idea of ‘live’ formats has changed. Audiences experiencing a live concert from home with their VR-headset while sending feedback to both the artists and their friends is no longer a far-fetched science fiction. Arenas customised for digital-live events exist around the world, creating places where the notions of the digital and the physically live will dissolve into a hyper-live experience. The new digital-live formats will profoundly change the working conditions for performing artists when a worldwide audience can zoom in on every detail of the performance.

AI and immersive technology offer many opportunities for audience engagement and new business opportunities for creatives. It also provides us with better technological solutions for online meetings and co-creation across borders, which is ideal for international collaboration. At the same time, AI threatens to replace many creative jobs. I believe that artists, creatives, and humanist professionals need to be present and influential in the fast-paced development of new technology that will significantly influence our lives. But we need to be quick…

\(^{78}\) [https://www.actionlearningassociates.co.uk/](https://www.actionlearningassociates.co.uk/)
Cultural sensitivity

International collaboration has always required communication skills. Knowing several languages and grasping and embracing cultural differences is important. But today it is more urgent than ever to find out how to orientate oneself as a culture professional in a world of wars, conflicts, crisis, politics, and simplistic messages.

Therefore, my fifth and final aspect for international collaboration concerns cultural sensitivity. To me this is an essential skill for international collaboration. Cultural sensitivity is the process of becoming aware of cultural differences without judging them. It is about observing and acknowledging cultural variations and diversity without the need to say what is better or worse. Inclusion for me starts with this. Needless to say, studying and understanding the geopolitical as well as the historical context of the field(s) we engage with is also essential.

Cultural sensitivity requires us to be self-aware. We must realise that wherever we go, we are still ourselves. We always read and understand the world from our personal perspective. Our world view has been shaped by our experiences and choices, and this influences how we look and act in the world, and how the world responds to us. Maybe the most important skill for culture professionals who want to work internationally is to work on their assumptions about the other. There is always another layer to unfold, another story to be told, another perspective to consider. For those with the privilege of travelling and working abroad, this is probably the greatest responsibility we have.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Birgitta Persson has worked on organising all kinds of artistic events and projects, mainly within performing arts, as well as on managing an independent cultural centre in Sweden. For 12 years she was the Secretary General for the network of cultural centres Trans Europe Halles. She has initiated and led many international projects and collaborations, been engaged in EU policy, and helped develop international networks. Between 2019 and 2023 she worked as a consultant and trainer for cultural organisations, mainly in Slovakia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Ukraine, Denmark and Sweden. Currently Birgitta works as project manager at Future by Lund, the innovation platform initiated by Lund University. Her focus is on supporting collaboration between research, business, civil society, and public organisations in, across, and with the cultural and creative sectors. She is a board member for the cultural centre Maltfabrikken in Denmark and chair of the theatre company Månteatern in Sweden.
Whoever is Not Lost Does Not Yet Understand

by Vânia Rodrigues

I was unable to resist the temptation of using as a title this phrase by Mônica Hoff in her remarkable text 'How to keep on without knowing what we already know, or, what comes after magic words & politics of salvation' (2022). I did it because it so poetically captures one of the main ideas of this text. I did it also to invite more people to read her text and others in Chu et al (eds.) CLIMATE: Our Right to Breathe, L’Internationale Online and K. Verlag, Berlin. Finally, I did it to acknowledge her critical contribution to my own understanding of climate change issues, and how they impact and implicate the arts. I am keen to connect our work to the work of others as often as possible, making each other visible, and fighting logics of excessive authorial attribution and intellectual extractivism.
Back in the day, I remember travelling on purpose to Lisbon and other European cities to attend capacity building workshops on ‘internationalisation’. Typically, this would entail spending a couple of hours listening to a foreign expert speaking in front of their impeccably designed PowerPoint presentation covering issues pertaining to marketing strategy, portfolio management, how to build a touring budget (how to break even!), or how to approach international programmers and hosting venues. Occasionally, there would be a sprinkle of ‘intercultural dialogue’ on top. I soaked in the ‘tips’ to enhance my international contacts and networked furiously. At the time, my life as a theatre company’s manager was beyond hectic: I was always on the go, from rehearsal room to meeting, travelling back and forth, working on the verge of burnout. As I was always racing towards the next performance, the next co-production, the next international booking, fighting for a bigger audience, a higher status, and a bigger budget, it took me a great while to understand that such mode of production was not only personally and institutionally unsustainable – it was also blatantly un-ecological. However, for many years, securing a single date for a presentation in France or in Canada was a marker of success, legitimising both an artistic trajectory and my own professionalisation as an arts manager. This, of course, was because the idea of mobility had become the defining element of success. ‘It doesn’t even matter what you’ve done concretely; you just list, I don’t know how many residencies in three countries and throw in a European network. […] Your job is increasingly about interconnecting and less about what you actually do.’

Recently, this conceptualisation of ‘internationalisation’ has begun to be widely questioned, and concerns about social and environmental sustainability are informing important debates and changes. Indeed, the ecological emergency is already impacting artistic and curatorial decisions, as well as challenging production, touring and management models (Janssens & Fraioli, 2022; VoC, 2023; Vries, 2021). But, for many years, I thought that accumulating miles and countries was the kind of international work I was supposed to be doing, so the topics covered in that continuing professional development workshop indeed corresponded – at least partially – to the skills required for the job. This was especially true given that I was employed in organisations based in the outskirts of Europe. Working from Portugal – a small country sitting geographically and culturally between Europe and the Atlantic and economically categorized as semi-peripheral – meant having less access to markets and fewer opportunities for the circulation of shows. It also implied a relatively fragile cultural policy and arts funding framework, and being held down by the lack of proper cultural and transport infrastructure. Above all, considering the country’s tardy democratic turn, building an international career in the performing arts represented a practical and symbolic victory over our recent past – a fascist and colonialist dictatorship, which described itself as ‘proudly alone’. For a Portuguese cultural worker like me, therefore, the circulation of artists and culture professionals in the European space and beyond was as much about work and collaboration opportunities as it was about completing the promise of ‘progress’ and modernisation, affirming our freedom, becoming European, in a sense. This might help explain why it took me so long to become aware...
of – and ready to interrogate – the given notion of 'internationalisation', and why many cultural practitioners in similar situations find themselves caught in conflicting perspectives and feelings in the face of current debates sparked by a mounting sense of urgency around climate change and other threats to planetary well-being, and the way these can be related – or not – to our own carbon-emitting activities, especially air travel. Indeed, the questions Portuguese artists and producers are facing are as deeply rooted in national shortcomings as they are global dilemmas. They are utterly practical and indisputably political: should small-scale, not-for-profit artistic and cultural activities based in semi-peripheral countries bear responsibility for the ecological crisis? Should cultural practitioners be held accountable to a problem some of them see as originating and reaching so far beyond their power? Should they refrain from intensifying international touring, even in the face of well-known asymmetries inside the EU? (Janssens & Fraioli, 2022)

For producers and arts managers, this is a challenge with profound implications. Soon after the historical process of emergence and social legitimation of their profession is almost complete, the social and environmental sustainability dilemmas push cultural management towards reviewing its expansionist assumptions and productivist processes (namely, of high mobility).

I have been arguing elsewhere that this is a critical juncture for the field of cultural management that we must fully acknowledge and seize (Rodrigues, 2024). While it may be true that the ecological emergency accelerated the debate, the recognition that the sector was operating in overdrive is far from recent. Several voices had been denouncing the 'festivalisation of culture' and the 'regime of creativity', festivals being a clear example of the gordian knot: they function as neoliberal platforms that showcase the perverse processes of ‘compulsive creativity’ but are paradoxically also the places where its critique is possible. The ‘age of innocence’ (Janssens, 2018) of our internationalisation efforts has arguably come to an end, as our transnational work today is surrounded by paradoxes, frictions and contradictions. Given the crucial intermediary role that producers and managers play in this field, this debate implies that we feel ready to challenge a hegemonic and highly restrictive understanding of 'success', one that had 'internationalisation' as its core attribute. Problematising success in terms of the international dimension of artistic practices would also involve recognising that, despite the indispensability of international cultural exchanges, this field of action is not without its excesses and risks. Some of the most commonly cited risks include: 'self-satisfied hypermobility', in which artists constantly jump from residency to residency, from performance space to performance space, without really establishing meaningful relationships with the communities they pass through or without ever leaving a cultured middle-class audience bubble; the risk of burnout; the risk of 'exoticizing the other', given the disproportionate distribution of travel opportunities; the risks of the monoculture of 'European festivals'; and, last but not least, the risk of ecological negligence, 'due to excessive travelling in environmentally harmful means of transportation’ (RESHAPE, 2021). Time has come for arts professionals to come to terms with the fact that, while the value of transnational exchange and international mobility remains indisputable (and must be upheld as a human and cultural right), our ways of supporting it have perhaps been too dependent on the models and worldviews of the 1990s, in their optimistic, Western-centric, export- and growth-oriented tendencies. Truth is, we might never have been fabulous. Acknowledging this represents a change of pace, of values, and direction. The challenge for arts management is now more complex than simply getting things done. We need to ask different questions: who gets to do things? Where, what for, and for whom? These are interrogations that point to the need to decolonise the field (Bonilla, 2019; Gaio, Joffe, Hernández-Acosta and Sesic, 2023) and signal the need to imagine what an eco-ethical arts management might be.
Envisaging how international arts management practices might be informed by sustainability and environmental ethics, needs to be rooted in the concrete experiences and perspectives of cultural workers, otherwise it risks being a rhetorical sham. Thinking with(in) our ways of doing is crucial if we are truly invested in learning and unlearning about international collaboration and development in this new context, in which ecological, social and ethical demands fundamentally challenge the arts modi operandi. Let us delve into six fragments of statements from Portuguese arts professionals. Their international journey will resonate with many of us, especially those working farther from the centres of privilege, in distinct ways. They help us map old and new gaps, suggest possibilities for action; they improvise, improve, experiment. They can be a beacon for the skills we have to look out for.

- **Clara Antunes** (CA), **Cláudia Hortêncio** (CH) and **Marta Martins** (MM) are project managers and producers with diverse backgrounds who share a passion for cultural democracy and participatory, socially transformative performing arts projects. Currently they are working at different capacities in ARTEMREDE, a cultural cooperation project gathering 18 cities, including the capital Lisbon.

- **Ana Carvalhosa** (AC) is a senior producer at CIRCOLANDO, a project with artistic direction by André Braga and Cláudia Figueiredo in the field of interdisciplinary intersections, with a focus on performing arts. Throughout its 23-year journey, they have created more than 30 shows, been present in 23 countries, and established a creation centre – Central Eléctrica – that currently hosts over 80 artists annually in residence.

- **Xavier de Sousa** is a producer, performance maker, and independent curator. Beyond his own creative work, he is involved with New Queers on the Block (UK) and the digital platform for research on transnational performative practices, performingborders (UK/PT).

- **António Pedro Lopes** works as an artist, cultural manager, curator, and artistic director. He has directed festivals, exhibitions, and artistic projects in Portugal, Europe and USA. A co-founder and co-director of the Tremor music and art festival on São Miguel Island, Azores, he recently coordinated and artistically directed the bid of Ponta Delgada – Azores 2027 for the European Capital of Culture.

Everybody remembers a time when ‘the goal was only to establish contacts, to build an international experience and network that did not exist’ (MM). They have since then taken part in various EU-funded projects, co-productions and other transnational formats, and are now more fully aware of what it is about: ‘partners are motivated by personal growth, knowledge sharing, empowerment, and participation models, where the process matters much more than the result’ (CA). ‘Participation in networks and the development of collaborative projects contain the potential to create, even if momentarily, a privileged time-space for listening, sharing, and imagining alternative formats, and even institutions.’ (AC)

Internationalisation has been a key steppingstone of their and their organization’s professionalisation, both in terms of the capacities it demanded and the financial resources it brought in. That process made them aware of ‘the centrality of that kind of

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82 Their statements were collected in January-February 2024. In some cases, they were slightly edited for clarity.
83 https://www.artemrede.pt/en/projects/#0
84 https://circolando.com/
85 https://newqueersontheblock.com/
86 https://performingborders.live/
87 https://www.tremor-pdl.com/
funding for the continued success of the structure’ and made them more attuned to innovation and to new opportunities to ‘continuously foster sustained dialogues with international partners’ (APL). Put differently, once you start collaborating at transnational level, there is no coming back: the doors are open to a ‘trajectory of tendentially exponential growth’ (CA). In that path, there seems to be a time for illusion, and a time for wisdom: ‘no matter how small they [the international cooperation projects] are, they require a very significant investment of time and intellectual resources, almost always disproportionate to the financial counterpart they offer’ (CA). A shared project calendar might encapsulate exciting promises, but the reality is that they ‘almost always find very small teams overwhelmed with work. International projects always bring additional work on top of the usual (which is immense), and often, there is a feeling that during travel and meetings, there is a workload left back home that no one will compensate for, leading to a continuous overload.’ (CH) This is not, by all means, new. We have long diagnosed a culture of self-exploitation and burnout plaguing the arts and culture, and related mental health issues are finally getting more attention. But, while we hope and fight for significant changes at policy level and in programme frameworks, how can cultural workers devise more sustainable cooperation strategies? ’We have learned to place more and more importance in leisure moments, meals, breaks, time for informal conversations where we can share fears and challenges. We recognise and try and fight the “hyper-productivity of own work plans”.’ (CH) ‘We make sure there is enough time together: not just to address the tasks, but to build trust, to share a glass of wine – quality and pleasure needs to be in the equation.’ (MM) ’It is no longer just about going to a location to present our show; it is about seeking affinities, with some calm, between similar or different structures. The formats of sharing have also diversified, with slower processes of knowledge such as conversations, walks, and communal meals now being valued.’ (AC)

These temporary, committed, intensive projects have also been challenging conventional leadership models. AC speaks, for example, of their decision-making processes being done consensually rather than by majority, out of a desire to reach ‘inclusive, innovative, and effective decisions. We consciously opted for a horizontal collaborative model, in line with the desire to seek small and slow solutions capable of resisting productivity pressure.’ But, she reckons, ‘the transition from individualism (of each organisation) to the collective (of an ephemeral project) is a complex and challenging process. To avoid possible deadlocks, we previously defined that after two meetings without consensus, the partner responsible for the action decides.’ Developing an international career or working transnationally and in diverse partnerships ‘involves mediation, bridge-building, creating matches, extended conversations, coordination, negotiation (including financial negotiation), patience, persistence’ (APL) and ability to advance through trial and error. It demands ‘humility, dialogue capability, and careful management of relationships […] so that everyone feels that cooperation is a safe space, mitigating inevitable imbalances resulting from structural power relations (e.g. institutions with more robust budgets and led by men tend to occupy more space).’ (CA) Even if we are mostly using European funding mechanisms, we need to ‘see beyond Europe and understand our role in the world, including the privilege of the North/West, colonial heritage, and migration routes’ (MM). It calls for imagination in ‘finding alternative communication methods to the dominance of English’ (APL, AC, MM). It includes ‘managing tensions, fatigue, and frustrations in airports’ and other in-between spaces (CH).

Unsurprisingly, they also confirm that ‘in recent years, issues of ecological emergency have gained prominence both thematically and operationally’ (APL). They are dealing with this in various ways, many times making it up as they go along, aware of the paradoxes and insufficiencies of their decisions: ‘we have been rethinking the number of trips and overall mobility, as well as trying to, whenever possible, change to more environmentally friendly means of transportation’ (CH and MM). ‘Azores being an archipelago, we have sometimes tried to use boats for the transportation of materials’
(between the islands and the mainland) but that remains challenging – due to weather conditions and the scarcity of local resources (APL). They schedule longer artistic residencies, with greater impact in the local communities, but that also poses a challenge for parents and caretakers travelling for longer periods, so they stay with the trouble, and keep experimenting with different formats. And, CA worries, it may be insignificant that we rearrange artists’ trips while, in a given project ‘partners travel 36 times over 4 years, totalling about 720 individual trips, with the vast majority involving layovers!’.

In fact, artistic mobility (of artists, programmers, producers and audiences) has been on the spot in the conversation around the green transition. But might it be too easy a target? APL and XS speak of other efforts, such as the ‘dematerialization of communication (minimising the use of paper and other physical materials)’, using ‘the public water network to provide free water to all event participants’, organising ‘a public transportation system for participants’, ‘upcycling the festival’s merchandise’, ‘using a cashless system’, or acquiring ‘materials locally and preferably second-hand’. Working in disparate contexts across the globe has allowed them to perceive how the Global South is disproportionately affected by climate issues. XS talks about his recent work in Kenya, where a warehouse on the outskirts of Nairobi that houses digital content storage drives for YouTube was recently closed because it needed so much water for drive cooling that it deprived more than 10 local villages of water. That experience helped shape important decisions such as partnering up to ‘reduce the digital footprint on platforms used for content dissemination, transmission, and marketing’, ‘reducing and streamlining uploads of digital content on various platforms’ or ‘co-sharing drives’.

For XS, working with ecological awareness eventually boils down to adopting ‘hyper-local production models’, that is, working locally with local resources and teams, minimising the impact of travel and shipping of materials. This can easily pass for an operational adaptation, but the implications are much wider: avoiding ‘transporting works internationally’ (XS) opens up stimulating creative possibilities (re-enactments, delegated performances, etc), provokes formal experimentation (by reducing the quantity of physical materials, focusing more on body, voice, and projections, finding inventive ways to present performances in person), promotes shared authorship, and can encourage redistribution of privilege and access. Working contextually and locally may also bring ‘local populations closer to themes related to biodiversity, species preservation, ecological crisis awareness, and the urgency of intersectionality’ and foster the ‘discovery of local traditions, ancestral knowledge, and gastronomy’ (APL), as Tremor Festival does through their Community Kitchen and Na Nossa Mesa projects and their online restaurant guide. But amid all the green buzz, we must remain critical. Indeed, AC speaks of the difficulty in dissociating ‘what comes from the agenda and what was already in our concerns of the moment. Agendas are cross-cutting, and a process of conscious unlearning is necessary to avoid falling, in our projects, into a mere enunciation of principles and themes with terms forged from support regulations, which benefit those who dominate the lexicon and the competitive rhetoric.’ Again, Portugal might be a vantage point from which to look at all these changes: as a country living in a dictatorship until the mid-1970s, this tendency to overemphasise local artistic production sends chills through our minds and bodies, especially at a time when ultra-nationalistic discourses and extremist populism are on the rise.
Towards eco-ethics in the arts

Embracing sustainability while working internationally in the arts, then, might have less to do with dutifully applying green recommendations than with unlearning ways of doing which are tied to colonialist and mercantilist legacies. The skills we as a sector need to develop are less anchored in certainty than in ambiguity – that is why, I argue, learning through eco-ethical dilemmas might be vital. Prescriptive approaches to sustainability leave contradiction and complexity behind, or, at the very least, belittle them. Experimenting with eco-ethics implies redirecting our attention to mutually reinforcing relationships between the domination of nature and the domination of women, races, and classes. Doing that may involve analysing the sustainability of artistic practice through the lens of permaculture, adopting some of its principles such as observe and interact ('Making the most of what is already in each place. Spending time observing our surroundings in order to devise solutions that fit a specific situation. Decide where to look.'); apply self-regulation and accept feedback ('practise reflexivity throughout processes, seek feedback'); use small, slow solutions ('Start with small changes, strive for expanded time'; use the edges and value the marginal ('learn from the other, try to integrate the difference, propose new intersections'). For producers and arts managers this amounts to redeeming their professions from an action-oriented straitjacket, reconceptualising production and arts management as an artisanal activity, and not an industrial, efficiency-led ingenuity. It is a counter-definition of arts management, one that is justice-centred and does not eschew its capacity to interfere sensitively and politically in the world. This eco-awareness and susceptibility points to a different skillset than that which is readily available in arts management programmes. But how do you teach vulnerability? One way I have been attempting this is through our experimental study programme in Cultural Management and Sustainability. We are focusing on training cultural leaders – be they artists, community activists, producers, or top managers – to fully engage with eco-ethics. We have been experimenting with the use of eco-ethical dilemmas in the classroom, which involves practicing ambiguity, otherness, empathy in fictional circumstances akin to real-world situations. This is a pedagogical practice rooted in an ecofeminist understanding of the broad field of arts management, one that does not interpret ethics in an essentialist way, fully presuming there are no intrinsically correct ethical values when it comes to ecological issues.

Correspondingly, the research I have been undertaking starts from an ethically and epistemologically cautious reading of the plethora of ‘best practices’ manuals, toolkits and how-to guides, especially those with a pragmatic vocation, which seem to take the link between the environmental emergency and the arts and culture for granted, rather than problematise, debate and justify it. Specifically, I have been arguing against an excessive focus on the pragmatic dimension of the ‘green transition’ (e.g. the obsession with carbon-emissions calculators and environmental metrics, which can sometimes be read as nearly techno-optimism) and insisting on the contextual situatedness of such a clearly global problem. Indeed, in the nationwide survey we conducted, most of the respondents’ perceived conflicts seemed to be of a political or ethical nature, poignantly indicating the need to explore the role of cultural policy and of eco-ethics in the arts ecological transition process. The severity of the urgency notwithstanding, we need to make time for questions such as: how much distance is there between mobilising the potential for the social

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88 This approach is defended and implemented in the PLANT - Performing Life Akademia Network Creative-Europe funded project. It is a wonderful example of how to use dominant frameworks to try out counter-hegemonic processes. [https://performinglifeakademianetwork.eu/](https://performinglifeakademianetwork.eu/)

impact of art and its institutions and a sophisticated version of superficial self-instrumentalisation? It seems essential to advocate for a more critical analysis of individual, organisational and sectoral responsibilities towards the ecological emergency – one that allows for a fair degree of ambivalence and is reconciled with uncertainty. Defending leeway for complexity and ambiguity amid the proliferation of public statements and action plans seems to me to be vital to secure a role for the arts and culture in the green transition that is truly transformative, and not merely a mechanistic compliance with procedures.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Vânia Rodrigues worked as an arts manager and consultant for several cultural organisations in Portugal and internationally before transitioning to a research career. Her professional trajectory is associated with various artistic organisations, from national theatres to independent theatre companies. She continues to participate regularly in initiatives in the fields of arts management and production, cultural policies, strategic planning, and transnational cultural cooperation. She holds a Ph.D. in Artistic Studies – Theater and Performative Studies from the University of Coimbra and a Master in Cultural Policies and Cultural Management from the City University of London. Currently she coordinates the Post-Graduate Diploma in Arts Management and Sustainability at the University of Coimbra and co-directs the research platform Modes of Production – Performing Arts in Transition and the exploratory project GREENARTS (FCT), musing on the intersections between the regimes of production and creation, as well as the discursive and practical transformations of artistic production in the face of growing demands for social and environmental sustainability.