



Reset! Atlas of Independent Culture and Media



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Policy Proposals

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Under Reset! Vision

For two years now, the Reset! network, representing European independent cultural and media organisations, has been working to promote this third sector, to defend its interests, to document its challenges, and to empower its members.

Local workshops, reports, editorial contributions, training; the activities carried out by and for the network's members have been numerous and have paved the way for Reset!'s latest action: its advocacy.

This advocacy document seeks to provide a non-exhaustive exploration of the profound layers

embedded within the Reset! network's actions—a meticulously crafted structure that not only underscores the urgent need for a social and cultural reset, but also articulates a nuanced and expansive roadmap for a horizon characterised by equity, inclusivity, and sustainability.

Rooted in the principles of independence, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to social justice, the network's political vision transcends the geographical boundaries of the continent to foster a global European movement, uniting organisations in a common quest for positive change.

The Evolution of a Vision

The Reset! network's vision is a direct response to the pressing landscape of political challenges facing independent cultural and media organisations. From war, to obscurantist, reactionary, and authoritarian forces coming to power in several countries—exerting an unusual pressure of censorship on freedom of expression and cultural exchange—to private corporations massively buying up entire fringes of the cultural and media space, independent scenes are now, more than ever, under multiple threats, from disappearance to repression to takeovers, along with the ongoing ownership concentration of their sector. In this situation, Reset! acknowledges the shortcomings of conventional paradigms and adopts a transformative approach that considers diverse perspectives and contexts, reflecting the diversity of voices within the network.

A Call to Collective Action

This document focuses on concrete actions and changes proposed by the Reset! network and its member organisations at both local and European level. The network's approach, facilitated by its diverse coalition, transcends theoretical frameworks. It emphasises practical initiatives driven by collaborative alliances, community-driven projects, policy advocacy, and the promotion of innovative solutions.

Recognising the power of collective action, the Reset! network encourages its member organisations to join forces together with actors outside the scene, notably public institutions (cities and universities) in the pursuit of a shared vision for a broader transformation. By fostering inclusive dialogues and collaborations, the network aims to create a collective consciousness that transcends borders and cultural differences to better work towards strengthening independence and its roots.

The Reset! network collectively strives to pioneer a paradigm shift in cultural norms and progress. Embracing the network's vision is not just an acknowledgment of the challenges at hand, but an active commitment by the independent scenes to lay the foundations for a fairer, more compassionate, and sustainable sector.

This exploration therefore invites actors from different backgrounds—university, civil society, cities, and the independent cultural and media spheres—to actively participate in shaping a horizon that prioritises creative freedom, artistic diversity, pluralism of opinion and, more generally, the emergence of alternative narratives and voices, both nationally and internationally, within and across borders.

As we navigate this expansive narrative, the aim is not just to address some of today's challenges, but to sow the seeds of positive change led by the diverse voices within the network. Together, let's forge a narrative that transcends borders and inspires collective action towards a future of independence, pluralism, and a renewed sense of global interconnectedness.

Under Reset! Proposals



Strengthening Collaborative Alliances: Cities and Independent Cultural & Media Entities Across Europe

Background

The cultural and media landscape in Europe thrives on diversity, innovation, and independence. Independent cultural and media organisations play a crucial role in shaping the narrative and fostering creativity. However, these entities often face financial challenges and limited resources. Recognising the need for targeted support, we propose a pilot project titled “Strengthening Collaborative Alliances: Cities and Independent Cultural & Media Entities Across Europe.” This initiative aims to bridge the gap between local cultural and media organisations and their cities, fostering a stronger, more interconnected European cultural ecosystem.

Proposal

The proposed pilot project entails selecting 10 European cities for a three-year programme. Each city will serve as a hub to connect and support independent cultural and media organisations within its locality. The funding provided through this project will empower these organisations with the resources needed to thrive and innovate, in a cascading grant dynamic. Additionally, a key feature of the initiative is the establishment of a sandglass dynamic, creating a reciprocal relationship between European organisations, cities, and local entities. This innovative approach ensures a continuous flow of support, knowledge, and collaboration at all levels.

City Hubs for Local Support

→ Select 10 European cities as hubs for the pilot program.

→ Empower these cities to serve as focal points for supporting and nurturing independent cultural and media organisations within their localities.

Sandglass Dynamic for Reciprocal and Cross-Cultural Relationships

→ Establish a sandglass dynamic to create reciprocal relationships between European organisations, cities, and local organisations. Foster a continuous and dynamic flow of support, knowledge, and collaboration ensuring a well-rounded and mutually beneficial exchange.

Direct Funding for Empowerment

→ Allocate funding to independent cultural and media organisations at the local level.

→ Enhance the autonomy of these organisations, providing them with the necessary resources to thrive, innovate, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Expected Outcomes

Local Empowerment

Direct funding to independent cultural and media organisations at the local level will enhance their autonomy, enabling them to produce impactful content and contribute to their communities.

Sustainable Impact

By selecting 10 cities every three years, the project ensures a dynamic and evolving support system. This approach adapts to changing needs, promotes sustainability, and encourages long-term growth in the cultural and media sector.

Cross-Cultural Collaboration

The sandglass dynamic will facilitate cross-cultural collaboration, allowing funded organisations to connect with counterparts in other European cities. This exchange of ideas, expertise, and creativity will enrich the cultural landscape and foster a sense of European unity.

Conclusion

The “Strengthening Collaborative Alliances” pilot project represents a forward-thinking and inclusive approach to supporting independent cultural and media organisations across Europe. By establishing strong connections between cities and local independent organisations, we create a framework for sustainable growth, cross-cultural fertilisation, and enhanced cultural independence. This initiative aligns with the European Union’s commitment to cultural diversity, innovation, and community engagement. We urge EU representatives to endorse and support this pilot project, laying the foundation for a more vibrant and interconnected cultural and media landscape throughout Europe. Together, we can empower local voices, strengthen collaboration, and celebrate the diversity of European culture.

Allies with whom this proposal was co-built: City of Lyon (Ville de Lyon)



Observatory on Threats to Independence: Safeguarding Independence in the European Cultural and Media Sectors

Background

The cultural and media sectors are a vital component of Europe's identity and diversity. Independent cultural organisations contribute significantly to the richness and variety of cultural expressions. The preservation of independence in the European cultural and media sectors is essential for maintaining the continent's cultural diversity and pluralism, fostering freedom of expression, nurturing emerging voices, driving cultural innovation, contributing to economic growth, and preserving the heritage that defines European identity. Any threats to this independence, particularly from concentration dynamics and monopolistic practices in ownership, jeopardise the very essence of Europe's cultural and media diversity and must be addressed proactively to ensure a flourishing cultural and media landscape.

Proposal

We propose the creation, as a pilot project, of an Observatory on Threats to Independence in the Cultural and Media Sectors, with a specific mandate to monitor and analyse ownership and antitrust concentration dynamics in the European cultural and media sector. This observatory would serve a dual purpose:

Informing Cultural and Media Players

→ Establish a robust system for collecting and analysing data on ownership structures, market concentration, and antitrust issues in the cultural and media sector.

→ Find an ethical and user-friendly online platform to disseminate information, research findings, and resources to cultural and media actors and the public.

→ Organise yearly workshop, seminar, and conference to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration.



Impact on Legal Framework

Engage in dialogue with policymakers, regulatory bodies, and relevant stakeholders to advocate for necessary changes in antitrust laws and regulations.

Expected Outcomes

Empowerment of the Cultural and Media Sector

Independent cultural and media organisations equipped with comprehensive and up-to-date information on ownership structures and antitrust concentration trends would allow them to better grasp the resources, research and analysis, and to empower them in navigating and responding to challenges.

Influential Legal Framework

The development of a legal framework that safeguards the independence of the cultural and media sectors will participate in solidifying the grounds on which independent cultural and media players are working on, lifting one tension off of the sector's shoulders.

Conclusion

The establishment of an Observatory on Threats to Independence in the Cultural and Media Sectors is crucial for safeguarding the diversity, creativity, and independence of Europe's cultural and media landscape. We believe that through informed advocacy and a collaborative effort, we can contribute to shaping a legal framework that ensures a fair and plural cultural and media environment.

Allies with whom this proposal was co-built: Live DMA



Empowering Voices: A Call for Recognition and Support for Independent Community Radios

Background

Independent community radios serve as powerful tools that amplify local voices, foster cultural diversity, and promote education within communities. Indeed, these community radios are generally funded and run by residents and listeners. The latter are usually trained by the residents to use radio equipment and to learn the basics of radio programming and running, training citizens and sometimes future journalists. They also do significant work around music and art, as well as news curation, actively offering alternative sources of information. Despite their significant contributions, community radios often operate in the shadows, lacking proper acknowledgment and support.

Proposal

This advocacy proposal seeks to highlight the importance of community radios in the cultural, media, and educational landscape, advocating for their recognition as a valuable model and collaborative philosophy.

Recognise Community Radios

→ Community radios clearly define themselves as non-profit, locally operated radio stations that prioritise community engagement, inclusivity, and grassroots content creation—having unique characteristics at the intersection of media, culture, and education sectors.

→ Emphasise the distinct role community radios play in representing the diverse voices within a community without external influences.

Acknowledgment of Importance

→ Showcase the cultural, social, and educational significance of community radios in preserving and promoting local culture, traditions, and languages.

→ Emphasise the role of community radios in fostering a sense of belonging, social cohesion, and civic engagement.

→ Advocate for recognition of the independent nature of these radios and their ability to serve as watchdogs, ensuring unbiased representation.

→ Advocate for the integration of independent community radios into community development plans, recognising their capacity to operate independently while contributing to positive change.

Specific European Grant Scheme

→ Advocate for specific cooperation grants/open calls tailored to independent community radios, recognising their distinctive contribution to the media, artistic, and educational landscape.

→ Advocate for partnerships that respect the autonomy of independent community radios, facilitating knowledge exchange and capacity building without compromising their independence.

Expected Outcomes

Recognition and Integration

Achieving an increased recognition and acknowledgment of the cross-boundary nature of independent community radios, would position them as a distinctive genre. This recognition would pave the way for a more effective identification and support framework. Additionally, advocating for the inclusion of independent community radios in media policies is crucial for fostering a diverse and representative media landscape. It would include a strengthened educational impact, with independent community radios playing a pivotal role as platforms for self-directed learning and knowledge dissemination.

Empowerment

Establishing dedicated European grant schemes would empower independent community radios, providing the means to enhance their activities and foster creativity and innovation within the sector. Moreover, these grants would support the structuring of educational dimensions within independent community radios, playing a pivotal role in training future journalists and providing an alternative, diverse source of information. The strategic focus on independent community radios could also highlight their ripple impact on other sectors, such as the music industry, fostering collaboration and co-broadcasting opportunities.

Conclusion

This advocacy proposal seeks to redefine and recognise the narrative around community radios, positioning them as a genre that bridges old-school and new media, arts, and education. By securing recognition, support, and collaborative opportunities, independent community radios can thrive as models of grassroots empowerment, preserving and promoting the diverse voices that enrich our communities. It is time to amplify these voices and ensure that independent community radios receive the acknowledgment and backing they deserve.

Allies with whom this proposal was co-built: Independent Community Radio Network, Palanga Street Radio, Lahmacun Radio, Dublin Digital Radio, and Sphere Radio.



Driving Europe's Cultural Future: A Call for Ethical Digital Transformation in Creative Europe

Background

In today's digital landscape, the MAGMA structures—Microsoft, Apple, Google, Meta, and Amazon—exert an unparalleled level of domination and control, dictating the course of the virtual realm in manners that raise profound concerns. The unchecked authority of MAGMA structures raises ethical questions regarding their practices, stifled competition, potential censorship, and the exploitation of user data. This ever-evolving digital landscape then presents both opportunities and challenges for the European cultural scene. The prevalence of MAGMA poses a threat to the diversity and independence of cultural expression. Also, most cultural and media organisations—and beyond—are simply unaware of the alternatives that exist, or don't have the necessary support to implement these digital changes. To address this, we propose a strategic realignment of Creative Europe's digital policies to favour organisations committed to ethical digital practices.

Proposal

By aligning Creative Europe's grants and open calls expectations with digital ethics standards (free, fair, secure, respectful, generous, economic and ecological), by relying on initiatives like the ones developed by the NL Net Foundation, a European Commission-funded organisation dedicated to open internet, privacy, and digital rights, we can make substantial strides towards a more responsible and ethical digital landscape.

Support for Ethical Digital Alternatives

→ Prioritise organisations committed to using ethical digital alternatives that align with the principles of openness, privacy, and digital rights, by creating specific grants for cultural and media projects working on this topic.

→ Work towards a shift that will contribute to a more inclusive, diverse, and democratic digital cultural landscape.

Grant Allocation Criteria

→ Integrate criteria in grant allocation to increase culture and media commitment to ethical digital practices and collaboration with initiatives supported by the NL Net foundation.

→ Ensure that Creative Europe funds contribute to the advancement of responsible digital culture.

Collaboration with NL Net Foundation

→ Establish collaborations and bridges between Creative Europe and NL Net initiatives to facilitate knowledge exchange, capacity-building, and the development of ethical digital tools. The NL Net foundation, with its dedication to an open and sustainable digital society, is an ideal partner for fostering ethical digital practices in the cultural and media sectors.

Capacity-Building Initiatives

→ Allocate resources for training and capacity-building programmes that empower cultural and media organisations to adopt ethical digital practices, including the use of decentralised and open-source technologies.

Expected Outcomes

Diverse Digital Ecosystem

Encouraging the use of ethical digital alternatives will contribute to a diverse and resilient digital ecosystem that values pluralism as well as cultural and artistic freedom.

Empowered Cultural and Media Organisations

By collaborating with NL Net Foundation initiatives, cultural and media organisations will be empowered to take control of their digital paths, fostering independence and self-determination.

European Leadership in Ethical Digital Practices

Positioning Creative Europe as a champion for ethical digital practices will enhance Europe's global standing as a leader in cultural innovation and responsible technology use, thus contributing to European sovereignty in the digital sphere.

Conclusion

This proposal aligns with Creative Europe's mission to support and promote European cultural cooperation, and it reflects the organisation's commitment to adapt to the evolving digital landscape responsibly. By endorsing ethical digital alternatives and collaborating with NL Net Foundation initiatives, Creative Europe has the opportunity to lead the way in shaping a more ethical and sustainable future for the European cultural and media sectors.

Allies with whom this proposal was co-built: Framasoft



Sustaining Creativity: Enhancing and Adapting the Culture Moves Europe Grant for Inclusive Cultural Mobility and Improved Working Conditions

Background

The Culture Moves Europe mobility scheme, launched in 2022 within the Creative Europe framework, stands as a €21 million commitment spanning 2022-2025. An initiative of the European Commission and operated by the Goethe-Institut, it aims to facilitate cultural exchange by supporting the mobility of 7,000 artists and cultural professionals across Europe. With a particular attention on emerging artists, the scheme is divided into two actions: individual mobility and residency, fostering collaboration and enriching the European creative landscape. To qualify, applicants must articulate a clear project, specify the destination, and identify an international partner. While the Culture Moves Europe grant represents an essential scheme and an important step in the right direction to enhance cultural mobility, it's essential to recognise that its financial structure, particularly the 75-25% money division distributed in two instalments and the delay in issuing the second instalment, may pose challenges for artists and recipients, especially smaller and independent structures.

Proposal

The upfront expense requirement may hinder artist and cultural workers' participation due to the financial precarity inherent in the artistic and cultural field, and recognised by the European institutions in their EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026. To address this, we propose a nuanced adjustment to the disbursement model, ensuring better alignment with the unique challenges faced by cultural professionals. Recognising the broader issue of precarious conditions, we advocate for streamlining financial processes and providing more immediate and rooted support.

Shifting the Grant Allocation System

→ Introduce an upfront, single instalment structure to improve grant disbursement and contribute to efforts to improve cultural working conditions.

→ Strive to eliminate upfront expenditure for grant recipients.

→ Implement streamlined processes to minimise delays in the release of instalments.

Qualitative Reporting

→ Simplify reporting efforts to align with other EU-funded programmes, such as Erasmus+, and lighten the load on individual cultural workers' shoulders.

→ Encourage reporting in the form of an active editorial contribution from grantees to enrich the overall cultural content.

→ Establish an effective echo system within Culture Moves Europe for continuous engagement and communication, fostering a dynamic community for cultural exchange and development.

→ Focus on capacity building initiatives to enhance the skills and knowledge of grant recipients within the Culture Moves Europe grant.

Expected Outcomes

Increased Inclusivity

Adjusting the disbursement model will encourage broader artist and cultural worker participation, fostering diversity and inclusivity within the programme.

Improved Working Conditions

As the 75-25% grant allocation exacerbates the precariousness of cultural workers, acknowledging and addressing these financial challenges will contribute to improving the overall working conditions of cultural workers and create a more sustainable creative landscape. Simplifying the reporting process by limiting quantitative financial reporting and making it qualitative will set a reference at European level for respecting individual cultural workers and their overall workload.

Conclusion

The Culture Moves Europe grant is a vital initiative for cultural exchange, yet its impact can be further amplified by addressing financial barriers. By adapting the disbursement model to the realities of the cultural community, we can ensure the programme's success in fostering cultural mobility and simultaneously contribute to the broader improvement of working conditions for cultural workers. This proposal seeks to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of the Culture Moves Europe grant, ultimately creating a more resilient and dynamic European cultural ecosystem.

Allies with whom this proposal was co-built: De Structura

Under Reset! Map



This map shows Europe as we see it: fiercely independent and elaborately connected.

Look at the undulating landscape where every peak sings a song. The higher the summit, the more Reset! events and participants made their mark on that locale.

Based on real-life data created and collected by the Reset! Network.



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Disclaimer

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