

# DUBLIN



## IETM Dublin 2013

### Report: Creative Europe & Audiences

11 Apr, 2013, 13:00-15:00, The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children

**Speaker:** Ann Branch, Head of the "Creative Europe Programme – Culture" Unit, European Commission (DG Education and Culture), Belgium.

**Moderator:** Una Carmody, Director of Arts Audiences, a partnership initiative of the Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon and Temple Bar Cultural Trust, Ireland. Arts Audiences assists arts organisations in Ireland to broaden, deepen and diversify their audiences.

**Introduction:** The current European Union's Culture Programme expires at the end of 2013 and is being replaced by *Creative Europe* contributing to Europe 2020, the EU's strategy for jobs, growth and social inclusion. The presentation given by Ann Branch outlined the rationale behind the new programme, the problems it seeks to tackle, the new objectives and priorities, and its implications for cultural professionals, artists and cultural organisations in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (hereinafter called CCS).

*Creative Europe* will have a new focus on Audience Development as it is seen important for social cohesion, sustainable growth and job creation as well as enabling new ways for the programme beneficiaries to communicate & connect with their existing and potential audiences at home and across the borders. While the programme intends to safeguard and promote cultural and linguistic diversity it also seeks to help the sector overcome the difficulties entailed in engaging transnationally.

It will see the amalgamation of three existing programmes Culture + MEDIA + MEDIA Mundus into a single programme but maintaining separate strands thus continuing to recognise the sectoral differences and target the instruments appropriately. This merger will bring greater synergies between the sectors e.g. digital technology can be utilised by theatres, museums etc.

The programme is being simplified by reducing the number of calls for proposals managed by the Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency to **four** categories:

- Transnational cooperation projects
- European networks
- Literary translation
- European 'platforms' with a structuring effect (e.g. drawing on the example of the European Cinema Network in the MEDIA programme)

## **New focus:**

- Helping the sector to adjust to the challenges of the digital shift by facilitating international collaboration which helps to create new professional opportunities and access new markets through transnational projects. Peer learning will improve the skills of the sectors and strengthen their capacity to work internationally.
- Audience development – adding a new focus on the demand side in order to increase, develop and diversify audiences and to help more European cultural works reach larger audiences across Europe, which will also help more artists to make a living from their art.
- The shift in the technological landscape affects the creation, distribution, consumption and monetisation of cultural works and social media changes audience behaviour and expectations. The **digital landscape** opens up new opportunities for all of the above, including the need for new skills in the sector.
- Easier access to private funding for CCS SMEs (profit-making and non-profit-making) through a loan guarantee facility whereby the banks share financial risks with the EU and are educated in the CCS in order to have a systemic impact on the banking system. The loans would supplement grants.
- Combating shortage of comparable data across countries that currently make it difficult to design and implement policies and programmes for the whole of Europe and also on national level, as well as making it harder to advocate for cultural investment.

## **Conclusions on Audience Development:**

It is recognised that for audience development organisations need flexibility as one size does not fit all and each project proposal has to be looked at individually. There are opportunities out there to grow and diversify audiences. Based on research 60% of European citizens do not attend a single live performance or visit a single heritage site in a given year. In most countries, fewer than 20% engage in activities such as amateur theatre or play an instrument. There is therefore a tremendous opportunity for growth in cultural participation which can bring cultural, social and economic benefits.

There is a growing trend towards participatory art and co-creation, which are proving to be the most effective way of having a lasting impact on "non-audiences". The conclusions are published on the Commission website, as well as more information on audience development.

## **Summa summarum:**

Creative Europe essentially seeks to create the best possible conditions for artists to continue doing what they do and earn a living from it, rather than having to find alternative employment, and for European works to reach larger audiences across Europe, which will be beneficial culturally, socially and economically. The Commission's proposal for an increased budget is important symbolically. Although the calls for proposals cannot yet be published, organisations interested in applying for funding can start thinking now already about solid & strategic partnerships for the projects they are preparing.

## **Timeline:**

The proposal and budget is under discussion by the Council and the European Parliament, and it is hoped these negotiations could be concluded during 2<sup>nd</sup> semester in 2013. Publication of calls for proposals is hoped for in autumn of 2013.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/index_en.htm)

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**Additional to report:**

**Discussion highlights from the Q&A:**

**Q/A** *In the new programme festival funding line is discontinued, but festivals can continue to apply for funding through the cooperation projects strand. The festivals strand was massively oversubscribed and generated a great deal of disappointment, which is ultimately counter-productive. Many good proposals could not be supported due to the over-subscription and limited funds available. A pilot project for a festivals platform voted by the EP will be published in May in principle.*

**Q** *Culture Programme 2007 – 2013 enabled organisations to apply funding for projects with small budgets and does this continue to be possible under the new Programme. A* **The Commission is not planning to dramatically change what works well.**

**Q/A** *In regards the digital shift there was interest in the audience to hear how it'll impact the arts organisations. The impact can be significant and there is a need for upskilling and for finding new ways of engaging with audiences.*

**Q/A** *The audience was also interested in hearing if the cultural desks in countries are meant to connect regionally or wider? The aim is to merge these existing desks to provide the best possible service to the sector and make sure they are aware of the trends in the sectors.*

**Q/A** *One audience member had an impression that once you've been successful once your 2<sup>nd</sup> application may not be funded due to this very reason. The response was that each project is to be evaluated individually and it is the quality of the project proposed that matters, not the funding history.*

**Q/A** *Next up a question rose about audience development and if the Commission envisages successful applications having peer to peer transnational learning or is it more interested in hearing about project proposals that directly support audience development. In response the applicant may want to work on audience development project in a capacity building sense to improve the skills in the sector, or to build in audience development in a project helping artist mobility and the circulation of works. Alternatively a single project could seek to do both as the transnational cooperation projects allow activities at multiple points of the value chain. Guidance will be given in the application guidelines.*

*A comment from the moderator was that there is potential to do knowledge transfers between European partners as currently each tends to work in isolation developing their own audiences.*

**Q/A** *There was concern over finding suitable project partners and common ground to work on as well as audience tastes being very different in different countries. What may sell very well in one project country may be a failure in another. Response to this was that to find suitable partners to work with does require an investment of time, intercultural skills and dialogue however project with different angles can be submitted targeting local audiences in respective project countries.*

**Q/A** Application adjudication process was brought up next. This will be similar to the current model. There will be an ongoing call for culture experts to come forward to evaluate proposals. Usually there are two evaluators and they have to reach a consensus. Refused projects receive detailed feedback. The process is transparent.

**Q/A** Is there a minimum requirement of three project partners? The minimum number of project partners still has to be finalised and validated, but there will continue to be both larger and smaller scale cooperation projects.

**Q** Bank loans – performing arts organisations will likely struggle to understand how they can make use of this facility. How can they be assisted to make the necessary investments in audience development when their current budgets do not allow these additional investments.

**A** In performing arts it is difficult to recoup costs and the Commission recognises that the loan guarantee facility will not be of use to everyone, but the facility will provide additional, much needed finance and have a significant leverage effect on additional private investment from the banks. Bank loans can also be used for capital projects.

**Q/A** A comment was made on the Commission documents translated into different languages and some reference creative industries while others don't. This was a translation mistake in some languages. It was a deliberate decision to use the word "sectors", and the original version is the English version.

**Q/A** Can a project have two phases being initially about audience development and then entering into a production phase? The Commission wanted to have a flexible approach in view of the fluidity of the value chains in most of the non-audiovisual cultural sectors. In cooperation projects one can potentially use a grant for development and apply for a continuation for a production phase under a new project as long as the work ties in with the Programme's priorities. Alternatively these two can be submitted as one project. Applicants should, however, consider the sustainability and long-term impact of what they are proposing to do.