

AMPLIFY, DIVERSITY, INCLUDE

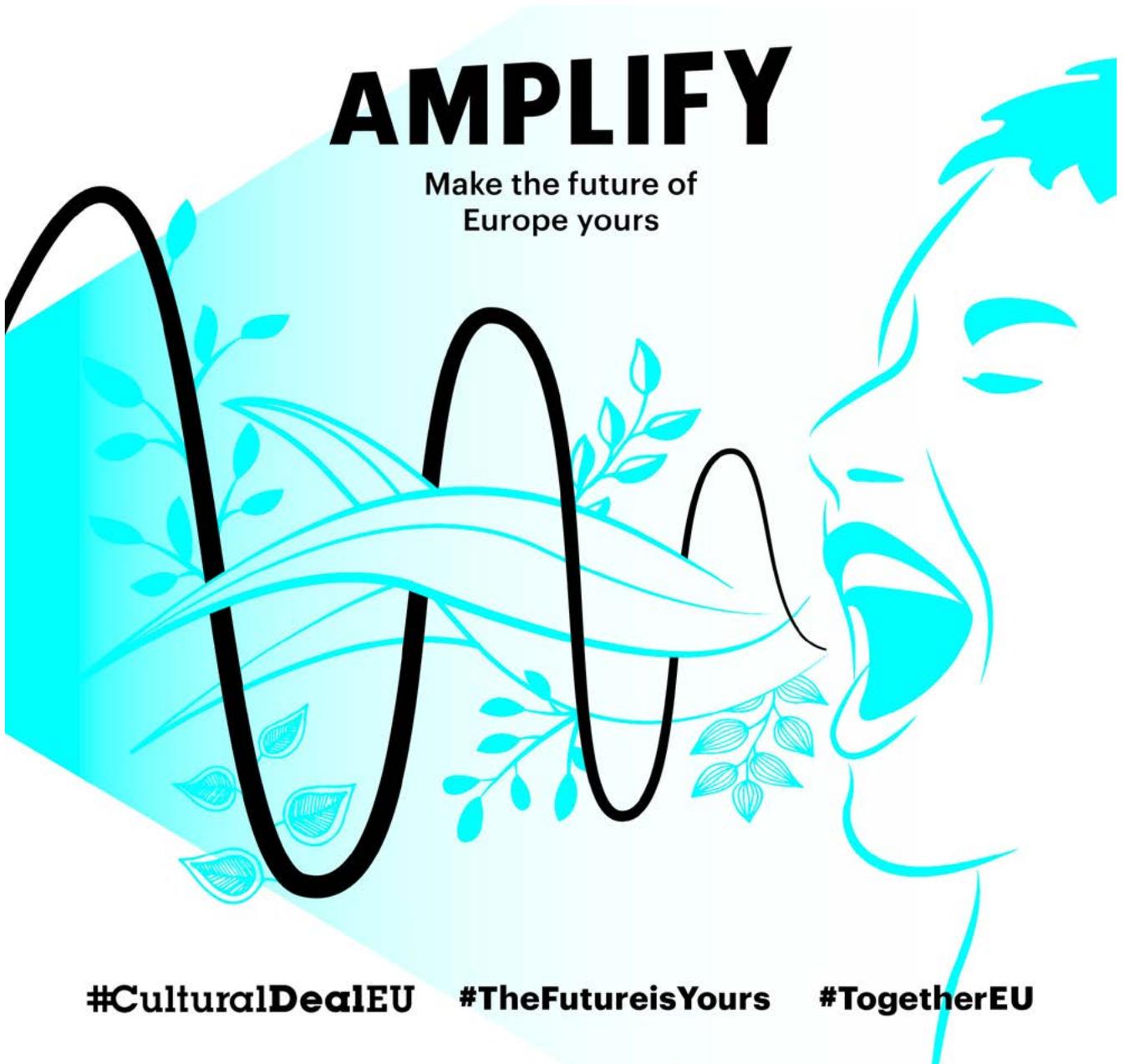


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On 9 May 2021, the long-awaited Conference on the Future of Europe officially launched, kicking off the initiative to engage European citizens in shaping the future of the European Union. In an unprecedented joint collaboration, the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Commission have developed this conference in commitment to listening to Europeans debate on the challenges and priorities for Europe to provide guidance for future policymaking.

AMPLIFY

Make the future of
Europe yours



#CulturalDealEU

#TheFutureisYours

#TogetherEU

The conference represents the first major pan-European democratic exercise, which is largely made possible by the core of the project, the [multilingual digital platform](#). This is the place for citizens to share ideas and send online submissions, which are available in any Member State language to foster engagement and interaction across European countries. The input on this platform will be collected, analysed, monitored and published throughout the Conference. Topics submitted on the platform will be debated in Citizens' Panels and Conference Plenaries. By Spring 2022, The organizers of the conference plan to draw and publish the conclusions of the Conference Plenaries and provide guidance on the future of Europe.

In line with this aspect of the Conference, the Communications Directorate of the EU Parliament established a grant programme with the principal objective to contribute to raising citizens' awareness of the role and democratic values of the European Union by promoting strategic engagement with EU citizens. Through this grant, the project, "Amplify: Make the Future of Europe Yours" was born.

Amplifying the Voices of Europe

Amplify: Make the Future of Europe Yours raises awareness and strategically engages marginalised and underrepresented communities in the cultural sector to participate in the conference across 12 EU countries: Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden. *Amplify* seeks to widen the diversity of voices that are included in EU-driven initiatives in the future. Our main goal is to gather ideas, proposals, recommendations, and concerns about the vision of culture in the future of Europe.

OO AMPLIFY DOES NOT AIM TO CREATE A MONOLITHIC VOICE FOR CULTURE ACROSS 12 COUNTRIES, BUT INSTEAD GATHER A SPREAD OF DIVERSE IDEAS AND APPROACHES TO CHANGE-MAKING THAT SERVE AS A BASIS TO INVESTIGATION AND DEBATE. OO

At the start of the project early in 2021, the country Hubs took extra steps to ensure a dialogue surrounding the definition of "underrepresented communities" as this differs depending on the context of each country and, in many cases, regions within countries. Instead of creating a list of communities in common of typecasting specific communities that are likely to be disengaged from EU-level discourse, Amplify's overarching criteria to define underrepresented communities are as follows:

- Artists, creatives, cultural organisations and projects operating in and at the edges of the cultural sphere



- People facing barriers to participation or access in the cultural sector
- People working in between the cultural sector and other sectors
- Voices that are underrepresented within the mainstream discourse and/or are located on the fringes of the mainstream narratives

THE RECOMMENDATION-WRITING EXERCISE SERVES AS A BEGINNING STEP IN A LONGER GOAL OF INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING AND ADVOCACY AROUND SIMILAR ISSUES AND GOALS.

Country Hubs can use these criteria to build working groups that are diverse not only in aspects such as gender, ethnicity, age and ability but also in aspects of the cultural sector itself. Amplify does not aim to create a monolithic voice for culture across 12 countries, but instead gather a spread of diverse ideas and approaches to change-making that serve as a basis to investigation and debate.

The national hubs will host listening sessions for their communities

Each Hub has mapped initiatives, organisations, and/or mediators in their respective countries, with a focus on underrepresented communities and/or those who are less likely involved in EU dialogues and actions. Hubs will meet in groups to collaborate around writing a recommendation to submit on the digital platform ahead of the Conference Plenaries that begin in October and November. These recommendations will be the starting point for further advocacy and synergy building later in the project.

The recommendation-writing exercise serves as a beginning step in a longer goal of international networking and advocacy around similar issues and goals. A communications project at its core, *Amplify* acts as a foundational step within a larger inclusive initiative. On 7 September 2021, a public launch of the Amplify campaign will focus primarily on the act of listening and the importance of institutional resources being devoted to bottom-up approaches to inclusive community engagement.

This amplification phase will result in a live, pan-European Hackathon, both providing a stage to highlight the work of the participants over the year-long project and offering a stage to respond to the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe

A Europe Wide Hackathon Event

The Europe-wide Amplify Hackathon will be on two levels. One part of the Hackathon event will include local meetings in each country. The other part of the event will feature a live broadcast throughout the day

to interact with the participants in each project country. In between these check-ins, there will be workshops, performances, interviews, profiles, additional content broadcasted from across Europe. The physical and the online parts of the Hackathon will react to the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

The Future is Created From the Bottom-up

It is a key goal of the Conference on the Future of Europe Executive Board that the Conference is truly a bottom-up approach and the diversity of European citizens is represented throughout the process. In order to ensure that this objective is realised, there must be an emphasis on breaking barriers to participation for all European citizens.

Amplify emphasises the already-existing public discourse that more work needs to be done to create accessible and inclusive pathways for marginalised people to participate within the cultural sector across Europe. While there are a number of initiatives to engage European citizens in the democratic process, it is still a reality that several voices across Europe are left out. *Amplify* is specifically searching for these gaps in communication and filling them by creating platforms for those voices to be included in the Future of Europe process. ▀

The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament.



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Before her work and research in Europe, she worked for ten years in the non-profit sector in the United States, focusing on methods of using art and creativity as pathways to diversity, equity and inclusion. As the Community Partnerships Coordinator at the Walker Art Center she created strategic policy focused on breaking down structural barriers that have traditionally marginalized people of color, indigenous and immigrant communities, and disabled individuals from large cultural institutions. She holds a BA in American Studies from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota and a Masters of Public Policy from the Willy Brandt School in Erfurt, Germany.