

FACTORIES OF IMAGINATION: CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

September 2017 to September 2021
EVALUATION SUMMARY

CONTENTS

	Page number
1. Introducing the Capacity Building Programme	2
2. More about the evaluation process	3
3. The programme strands and the difference they made	5
3.1 Business Model Development and Organisational Development	5
3.2 Start Up Support Programme	11
3.3 Leadership Programme	15
3.4 Arts Education Platform	25
4. Considering the evaluation questions	27
5. Overall key achievements and key points of learning	32
6. Recommendations	33
7. Conclusion	34
8. References	34
Appendices	35

Evaluation commissioned by Trans Europe Halles

Evaluation co-ordinated and reports authored by Nell Farrally www.nellfarrally.co.uk

For enquiries about this report contact Ella Overkleeft (Capacity Building Manager): ella@teh.net

1. INTRODUCING THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

Factories of Imagination: Investing in Cultural Changemakers Capacity Building Programme core purpose was to increase the organisational resilience of artist and activist-led cultural centres who repurpose Europe's industrial buildings for culture. The Capacity Building Programme (CBP) was one of 3 objectives in the 4-year Factories of Imagination project (2017 to 2021) funded by Creative Europe's Culture Sub-programme (Support to European Networks) and led by Trans Europe Halles (TEH). The other objective areas were *Connecting the sector* and *International co-operation and mobility*. The CBP had 5 strands of activity: Business Model Development, Organisational Development, Start-up Support Programme, Leadership Programme and Arts Education Platform. To achieve the aims of the programme, TEH co-ordinated stand-alone events and projects in addition to weaving activities into the network's established programme of conferences and camp meetings.

PARTICIPATION NUMBERS

Number of participations in CBP activities: **700**

Number of different countries where CBP participants are based: **38**

Number of different workshops, events and projects: **61**

PARTICIPATION NUMBERS BY PROJECT STRAND

Organisational Development: 110 participations in 16 workshops, events and projects

Business Model Development: 82 participations in 10 workshops, events and projects

Leadership Programme: 204 participations in 21 workshops, events and projects

Start-up Support Programme: 13 organisations participating in 13 workshops in 9 countries

Arts Education Platform: 181 participations in 7 workshops and events and 3 study visits

RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED

Start-up Support Programme: [Moving In, Moving On](#) (13 publications) and [Methodology publication](#)

The Penguins Project [website and book](#)

E-learning [Block-chain videos](#)

Arts Education Platform: Publication, [2 Seminar Reports and 2 Videos](#)

Case studies of cultural workers and centres

Formative evaluation reports for Years 1, 2 and 3 and Final evaluation report (this document)

2. MORE ABOUT THE EVALUATION PROCESS

TEH contracted an evaluation consultant to co-ordinate the evaluation process and lead on creating evaluation reports. They worked with TEH co-ordination office staff to create 4 evaluation questions to focus the evaluation:

1. To what extent has FOI Capacity Building Programme achieved its intended aims, objectives and outcomes?
2. What is the value of the programme to individuals who have taken part, their organisations, network members as a group, and the TEH co-ordination office?
3. What are the key successes, challenges and learning from the project?
4. How does the TEH co-ordination office respond to formative evaluation findings and network members' needs, to review and develop the programme?

An Evaluation Plan and Framework document set out how evidence and data would be gathered to understand progress towards the aims and objectives outlined in the original project plans and Creative Europe funding application. The evaluator and members of TEH co-ordination office staff produced intended outcomes of the programme to articulate what kinds of changes were expected to occur if these objectives were delivered. There were different dimensions to the intended outcomes: change for individuals, organisations and the network; and short, medium and longer-term change (see Appendix One for a matrix of intended outcomes). In years 1 and 2 of the programme, detailed formative internal evaluation reports discussed evidence of progress towards aims, objectives and outcomes. In year 3 of the CBP, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a complete revision of the project activities, also prompting a reconsideration of the evaluation plans. Whilst the evaluation still aimed to address the 4 evaluation questions above, a greater

FOI over-arching aim:

To enable cultural operators connected to non-governmental cultural centres across Europe to enhance their professional skills and expertise, develop their international networks and ability to work inter-culturally, and ultimately, help them build more resilient cultural organisations that can respond to global challenges.

Objectives:

- **Business Model Development:** To offer face-to-face and online training on business model innovation for non-governmental cultural centres.
- **Organisational Development:** To provide training on strategic management, new models of governance, engaging local communities, and facilitation of civil-private-public partnerships which supports the development of non-governmental cultural centres.
- **Leadership:** To provide a leadership skills development programme for changemakers working in non-governmental cultural centres.
- **Start-up Support:** To provide free strategic consultancy and training for selected emerging non-governmental cultural centres in beneficiary regions of Balkans, Eastern Partnership and South Mediterranean.
- **Arts Education Platform:** To offer a programme of events addressed at the needs of arts educators working in non-governmental cultural centres – including yearly seminars with invited experts, study visits, professional meetings, and a conference on the topic of participation in the arts.

inclusion of 'illuminative'* approaches to evaluation were adopted: seeking to understand what the programme was achieving and not foregrounding pre-defined intended outcomes. There was also a short year 3 evaluation summary report.

The methods of gathering evidence and data for evaluation included online questionnaires/surveys, online interviews, in-person audio-recorded interviews, organisations' own evaluations, and assembling written publications, films and resources created to document project activities (such as Moving In Moving On publications, Penguins Project website and book, and seminar reports). Project management records such as attendance registers also provided information about who and how individuals and organisations were taking part in different CBP activities.

It is important to acknowledge the challenges of gathering data to evaluate such a wide-ranging programme of activities. People who took part were frequently asked for feedback and their reflections on the impact of CBP activities. Due to geographical distances, this feedback was primarily requested remotely through email questionnaires or using online survey applications. Response rates to some online questions were very low – the CBP manager suspected people were 'over-surveyed'. To understand the longer-term effects of activities such as the Leadership Workshops, participants were requested to complete follow-up questionnaires one year later but this follow-up data gathering was not always effective. Members of the TEH co-ordination office staff did get direct verbal feedback through short audio-recorded interviews at camp meetings and conferences, although plans to do more gathering direct feedback in-person had to be abandoned due to the pandemic. Although a large amount of data has been collected and considered for the evaluation conclusions in this report, it must be acknowledged that evaluation data about some elements of the CBP is not comprehensive.

* Illuminative evaluation is an approach to 'understanding people and programs in context, a commitment to study naturally occurring phenomena without introducing external controls or manipulation, and the assumption that understanding emerges most meaningfully from an inductive analysis of open-ended, detailed, descriptive data gathered through direct interactions and transaction with the program and its participants' (Patton, 2015, p.207).

3. THE PROGRAMME STRANDS AND THE DIFFERENCE THEY MADE

3.1 Business Model Development and Organisational Development

The Penguin Project

The Penguin Project was part of the organisational development strand of the CBP which was not planned at the outset but grew from the ideas of Florian Cope-Ladstätter and Shawn Antoni Wright of Die Bäckerei, Innsbruck. The Penguin Project started from Florian and Shawn sharing their ideas at the Dresden TEH conference in June 2019 about using metaphors to help cultural workers to consider their relationship with their cultural centre. TEH co-ordination office staff saw the potential for these ideas to benefit the network members and supported a 'kick-off' workshop at Die Bäckerei in July 2019 for people from 5 cultural centre organisations. Following this event, there were workshops at TEH gatherings and scoping visits where Shawn and Florian visited cultural centres to work with people in their own centres (and later online due to the pandemic). The concept of the Penguin Project is that by developing greater understanding of what inspires and energises their work, cultural workers can create more sustainable working practices which reduce the likelihood of burn-out. In addition to facilitating the workshops, Shawn and Florian created a poster to illustrate the Penguin model, produced a [website](#) and authored a [book](#) to share their ideas more widely.

Data gathered for the evaluation included short audio-recorded interviews by co-ordination office staff and longer online interviews with 3 participants by the evaluator. The interviews were thematically analysed by the evaluator who generated themes to convey the main ideas people had about the project.

Penguin Project participants valued the sharing and exchange of a non-hierarchical mutual learning process. There was a genuine sharing and exchange of knowledge with a co-creation approach and a wish to develop tools for Organisational Development to be passed on to others. Longer-established centres had a willingness to share so others could benefit from their experience. For some, discovering that others had a shared understanding of professional challenges they faced was important.

There was strong sense that the approaches of the Penguin Project were needed. Some participants were already concerned about the high incidences of overwork, burn-out and turnover of individuals in the cultural sector before encountering Shawn and Florian's ideas. Participants also viewed that cultural sector workers utilising tools of the business sector was problematic. The values of the cultural and creative sector are different to the values of the business sector, therefore models from the business sector need to be translated for culture or new tools need to be developed. One participant spoke about her motivation for contributing to the Penguin Project.

'... finally there is something that is not pushing us to work more [but] about motivating us to stop and reflect.'

The approaches of the Penguin Project offered a different way of solving problems that is very human-centred and concerned with people's wellbeing. '*Psycho-hygiene for cultural workers*' was how one person described the project. Techniques which Shawn and Florian introduced to the group that encouraged creativity in understanding problems were appreciated. One participant spoke about how an exercise of creating an installation that expresses how participants viewed their role in their cultural centres was very illuminating for them, and contrasted with traditional processes of problem solving such as SWOT analysis. In addition, people spoke of cultural centres constantly transforming and that cultural organisations are complex organisms. TEH is a very long-established network, but there are always new organisations joining the network, new people joining organisations, new delegates at gatherings, and new ways of working being developed. The need to network and share, therefore, is continuous and ongoing.

People valued the project as it enabled a depth of thinking and an organic method of solving problems through prompting them to look at problems from a different perspective. Experiential '*learning by doing*' was valued. The use of metaphor to understand and describe problems was felt to be more in keeping with the creative sector (rather than using diagrams as favoured by the business sector). Interviewees appreciated that the process was people-orientated and showed care for the human beings within organisations. That the project was not striving to achieve any particular outputs was also valued.

Interviewees spoke of satisfaction with the project. They appreciated the process-based activity which left them energised and inspired. People had trust in the facilitators and commented on Shawn and Florian's skills at steering the process in a professional yet nurturing way. Interviewees were asked what could be improved about the project – with very little response as they were extremely satisfied. The only difficulties or limitations were that people found implementing what they had learnt in their own centre difficult due to everyday pressures and workload. They felt there was too long a gap in between the project meetings.

Members of the group felt that the Penguins approach had the potential to be rolled out across the network and could benefit many more people.

The evaluator did an online meeting with Shawn and Florian in May 2020 to gain more understanding of the project process where they reflected on the important elements of the project – that it is values-led and strives to use a co-creation approach. From the scoping visits which took place in Year 3, Shawn and Florian felt that the project process was most beneficial when the leader of the organisation participated in the visits (this was not the case for all organisations). In the initial stages of the pandemic, they did not feel that they could achieve the purposes of the project through online communication, therefore further scoping visits were delayed until international travel and face-to-face meetings could resume. Scoping activities did take place online once online communication became the norm as the pandemic extended. A further reflection was that the nature of the project only suits small numbers of participating organisations. Plans to open up the project up to more cultural centres beyond the original 5 participating organisations in Year 4 did not progress. However, Shawn and Florian are

continuing to use the resources created with organisations beyond FOI's CBP – expanding to use the Penguins approach to support other cultural workers.

Other Business Model Development and Organisational Development workshops

Workshops on various topics under the theme of organisational development and business model development were integrated into TEH regular gatherings (conferences and camp meetings) throughout the 4 years of FOI. These workshops were proposed and led by members who wished to share their knowledge with the network. To understand if people were using what they had learnt in these workshops in their work or sharing their learning with others in their organisation, as framed in the evaluation framework matrix of intended outcomes, TEH staff did short audio-recorded interviews with a selection of people who took part in workshops at the TEH87 Spring Conference in Dresden.

There were 2 interviews with people who attended a Blockchain workshop and 2 with attendees of the Action Read workshop. The interviews took place 16 months after participation in a one-off workshop, therefore some interviewees commented that their memory of the workshop was limited. However, all contributed useful reflections which illuminate the CBP evaluation process. The 2 Blockchain attendees found the workshop interesting but did not feel there was any way to apply what they had learnt to their work situation. The exchange of knowledge was appreciated, even though in this case there was no relevant application for the knowledge gained. For the Action Read workshop, one person reported that they applied what they had learnt in the workshop in their centre. The workshop had helped her to understand the differing perspectives of her colleagues, although she recognised that she had not taken a further step of sharing the Action Read techniques and theories with colleagues so they could themselves make use of them.

Everyone went on to give useful information about the CBP and FOI more generally. Amongst the interviewees, there was a range of awareness of Factories of Imagination and the different strands of activities. Some interviewees were members of the ExCom and therefore had a detailed knowledge of the programme: its purposes, activities and possible directions for future development. Others had far less awareness. Making communications about FOI clearer and more visible was suggested by some. People observed that there are so many different networks within TEH, it is difficult to have a '*global vision*' of everything which members could benefit from.

Other points expressed in the interviews which are pertinent to the evaluation are:

- The recognition of the wealth of expertise within the network around business models.
- An awareness of the diversity of needs within the network and that the variety of TEH projects aims to meet that diversity of need.

- The need for organisational development is an ongoing and long-term process. Further and more funding is needed to support this element of TEH in the future.
- One interviewee wished for the OD and BMD work to go beyond the theory and include more case studies and practical tools which others could use.

A series of **E-learning videos** about Blockchain design for communities were also created by Antonio Tenorio-Fornés in year 2 of FOI, but no formal evaluation of the video resources has taken place.

Shared Recovery Programme

The Shared Recovery Programme (SRP) was part of the Business Model Development strand of the Capacity Building Programme in year 3 of FOI. The SRP was developed by the CBP manager to respond to the support needed by TEH members as they faced the extraordinary challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. It involved 30 member organisations receiving peer-support and tailored advice from experienced consultants through a series of 5 online meetings covering leadership in crisis, programming, and funding and advocacy (October to December 2020). Each organisation completed a questionnaire which required articulating the main challenges, learning, solutions and sources of support they had experienced due to the pandemic. They then took part in an online interview with a consultant from **Olivarte** to explore their situation in more depth and receive immediate advice. Online group discussion sessions enabled a sharing of experiences, common problems and solutions between workers from cultural centres. Cultural centres were then paired with another centre who matched their situation most closely to facilitate ongoing peer-support.

Disappointingly, there were only 3 responses to an online questionnaire intended to gather feedback from people who participated in the Shared Recovery Programme, however, they all found the SRP to be a useful experience. The most important or valuable aspects of the programme were the space created for reflection, peer-to-peer support, exchange of experiences and ideas for dealing with the crisis, and a sense of solidarity and connection with other members. All respondents answered 'a little' to a tick-box question *how much have you made use of the SRP activities to consider your organisations business development needs?* (other answer choices were, *a lot*, *not at all* or *don't know*). Feedback about the structure of the SRP was positive.

'I thought the programme was well-rounded and incorporated lots of different (interconnected) aspects of running a cultural centre and responses to crisis situations.'

'It's a good structure to become inspired. But we're all too different to simply copy and paste the solutions of other centres.'

People were asked if there were elements of the programme TEH should continue to offer members. All respondents wished for TEH to provide further guided peer engagement for sharing of practices, experience and knowledge.

A further source of evidence towards the CBP strands is a series of **Case Studies** that explore the experiences of individual cultural workers and centres in more depth. Extracts of these Case Studies are presented in this report where they relevant to the overall conclusions of the CBP evaluation. One of the case studies featuring Ormston House included discussing how the SRP had helped their Artistic Director (Mary Conlan). There were several reasons why Mary found the SRP useful, but most of all it was the peer-support she received.

'I just think having that kind of solidarity of listening carefully to other people's experiences and sharing your own, for me was the most valuable part of it. I was like, OK, I feel really connected. And I'm hearing other people's experiences and they're listening to mine as well.'

The knowledge Mary gained of other centre's business models through the SRP has prepared her for further adaptations should Ormston House need to revise its business model in response to ongoing effects of the pandemic.

'There was quite a sharp increase in arts funding in Ireland as result of the pandemic and now we're waiting to see if that going to be maintained as our baseline or are we going to go back. It'll be devastating if we went back to pre-crisis levels. We have listened to other business models, so we're kind of primed if we need to rethink potentially our business model... And we're going to work with an expert on the new business plan, but also have these kind of crisis responses and rethinking the business model – what if we need to adapt? How could we do that? A lot of the information that I heard [in the SRP] can feed into the process.'

Caring for the wellbeing of the staff team was really important to Mary, given the uncertainty and extra workload the pandemic created. The wisdom of others in the SRP helped her in managing staff wellbeing. The SRP was such a valuable experience for Mary that she suggested having more sessions so that people could check-in and share how things were going further down the line and how recovery was progressing for other centres.

BMD and OD Key Achievements

- The Penguin Project is an example of the CBP harnessing the expertise that exists within the network. This project was not planned at the beginning of FOI, but the co-ordination office staff had the confidence to reallocate resources to a new activity whilst still meeting the objectives of the CBP.
- The CBP was responsive to members' needs, which changed due to pandemic. TEH successfully adapted the structure and content of the programme to fit the challenging circumstances members experienced.

BMD and OD Key Points of Learning and Reflection

- For some CBP activities, there is a paucity of evidence that learning is utilised. What little evidence has been gathered suggests there is limited use of learning in centres, although people value the culture of members sharing knowledge and peer learning with workshops even when there is no practical application for the new knowledge.
- There are other CBP activities, however (Shared Recovery Programme and Penguins Project), that do appear to be contributing to the resilience of the cultural sector through supporting workers' wellbeing and developing new tools for organisational development in the cultural sector (rather than emulating tools of the business sector).
- Through various people's contributions to the evaluation, there is a sense that acknowledging and understanding how the cultural sector's workforce development needs are different to the business sector is important.

3.2 Start-up Support Programme

The Start-up Support Programme (SUSP) has been steered by Chris Keulemans throughout the 4 years of FOI. Chris has written excellently crafted publications that share the process. ***Smart and Fearless*** is an overview of the SUSP. The story of each SUSP organisation's journey through the programme is captured in a series of ***Moving In, Moving On*** publications. These publications comprehensively describe the SUSP's process, achievements and learning, therefore this evaluation report does not aim to replicate the work already done by Chris and the team of coaches and mentors who also worked on the programme. A short description of the SUSP from the introductory sections of *Smart and Fearless* includes:

The Start-up Support Programme invests in bringing emerging cultural and creative spaces to their next level of development through:

- Expert consultation and coaching for their teams
- Peer-to-peer knowledge sharing involving other members of our network
- Networking activities during our conferences and meetings
- Access to TEH programmes like Capacity Building, Staff Exchange, Leadership, DISCE P2P Recovery etc
- Inspirational case studies of spaces in the start-up phase.

We offer:

- A scoping visit of two international experts, who have already founded and run their own cultural and creative spaces
- Situation analysis and organisational diagnosis
- Coaching from TEH peers over four months, including a tailor-made workshop by an expert from the network
- A separate publication about each of the selected emerging centres
- Access to a vibrant community of like-minded organisations in Europe
- TEH associate membership for two years.

(from ***Smart and Fearless*** pages 8 and 9)

In each year of FOI, the Start-up Support Programme focused on a different region (Balkans in year 1; Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine in year 2; Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in year 3; and Cyprus, Italy, Malta, Portugal, and Spain in year 4) and invited applications from centres in these countries.

The evaluation has undertaken some activities to gather direct feedback from people who participated that are additional to the SUSP process. These include:

- Interviews by Chris with year 1 and 2 SUSP organisations in October 2019 (notes of 6 interviews)
- A written questionnaire for people involved in year 3 and 4 SUSP organisations (5 responses)
- Case studies (Communitism and L'Asilo's case studies include information about the SUSP).

At the TEH88 Camp Meeting in Timisoara (October 2019) Chris led a closed session for SUSP organisations from FOI years 1, 2 and 3. He interviewed 6 people from year 1 and 2 SUSP organisations using a questionnaire created by the CBP evaluator. Notes from the 6 interviews were thematically analysed.

It was notable across the interviews that participation in the SUSP had initiated tangible change in several domains. The consultants' observations of each organisation during the scoping visits had prompted suggestions of making small changes in *how* organisations work that had produced results which lightened the burden for the core individuals. One example of a small change is a suggestion to not work from the reception desk of the centre so strategic work does not get interrupted by day-to-day immediate demands. Other SUSP organisations had different issues which could also be described in this way – small practical changes which have made the way that the centre works more effective. Aside from practical changes, it was common for the SUSP organisations to report changes in their strategic planning. The benefits of the practical changes had enabled core team members to focus more on planning and strategy. One example of how the SUSP had helped people to make changes:

'I'm more calm. Last year, it was crazy and hard, now I feel more stable. We have more people in the team, I don't need to clean the whole space and connect all the electronics when I enter in the morning. We were able to give ourselves a slight raise. We can focus more on strategy and planning.'

Several organisations felt that their involvement in the SUSP gave validation to their work – that the work they were doing was important and valued. The support of the TEH consultants added a gravitas to their organisations which was helpful in relationships and negotiations with landlords or local/municipal authorities. There were a couple of examples of involvement in the SUSP bringing financial benefits to organisations as it had introduced them to new funding opportunities.

All the organisations noted the value of the becoming part of a network which provides connections with others. Several spoke about not feeling alone in their endeavours through having connections with others who had experienced similar situations. Everyone was asked *What has been the most important thing to you about the Start Up Support Programme?*

'Networking. That doesn't sound original, everyone says so, but it's essential.'

'Before, we didn't realise that others have the same problems. Now we experience people who trust and listen, which gives us the feeling of belonging to a larger community, who can always help. The start of the TEH Eastern Hub is a good thing. We connect to other centres in the region. And pass on our knowledge to newer members.'

Making time to reflect was a noted benefit of the programme. People appreciated the bespoke, holistic and hands-on way the SUSP consultants worked by raising questions and offering options.

'Like the two of you came, observed, listened and let us know what might be the right question for us to find an answer. Discreet, sensitive, insightful and heartfelt.'

Several people spoke about becoming involved in other aspects of TEH activities, for example, moving on to apply for the Staff Exchange Programme, individuals taking part in the Leadership Course and the Eastern Hub.

'It's a transformative experience. It improves your decision making, your internal governance, deal with the ownership issues – and it shows you the solidarity of this very specific connected field of culture.'

Analysis of the written questionnaire for organisations that were part of the SUSP in years 3 and 4 generated themes that reiterated the year 1 and 2 interviews. The SUSP had enabled change for organisations with a balance of advice on how to make practical changes to working practices that improved day-to-day functioning, and more understanding of their vision and how to develop strategy. Identifying that team wellbeing was important to the success of the centre was a vital change for one organisation. Several SUSP organisations identified that being part of the network and the advice from the consultants had raised their awareness of 'the bigger picture' – that grassroots cultural centres all over Europe were working to achieve similar aims and people's horizons were expanded through this understanding. This extended to an increased awareness of the potential for international collaborations and funding possibilities such as Erasmus+. Asking exactly *how* the programme had enabled change for organisations revealed 2 kinds of responses – it was the sharing and knowledge of the other members AND it was the advice of the consultants. The sense of belonging, connection and solidarity with other members was very strong for some people.

'The sharing of our challenges, of our fears towards the type of work we do everyday; sharing those thoughts and knowing that there is a community that already went through that and can help you, can support you, can walk with you, was the most incredible thing about the programme.'

The expertise and the supportive approach of the consultants were recognised as reasons why the programme enabled change. The quote below perfectly summarises what one organisation's experience of the programme which echoes the important features identified by others.

'SUSP offers sense of belonging and mentors have taught us to work with the resources that we have and maximise the benefits to our organisation & our community. The programme was centred on prioritisation, concentration, deployment of existing knowledge and skills, and developing meaningful relations. We also learned how to transform our frustration into creative energy and develop healthy and ethical work practices. SUSP mentors are very generous with their time, attentive and active listeners, thoughtful and conscious about the socio-cultural and political situation. Each mentor is a role model who has invaluable and very diverse experience, and when paired together are able to provide a holistic assessment of a situation and help to find non-trivial solutions. They assisted our team in transforming our ideas into an action

plan, they are supportive in all possible ways, and most importantly, we are in touch and regularly update each other even after SUSP ended.'

In the Communitism Case Study, Natassa reflected on taking part in the SUSP in year 1 of FOI, over 2 years after taking part. The Case Study includes more in-depth stories of change in the organisation and what specifically about the SUSP process creates the change: the supportive approach of the consultants, the sense of connection with the network, and benefits of being internationally networked and part of a network with TEH's reputation.

'It helps our credibility locally by being part of that network. Whenever we address something locally, we have credibility... thanks to Trans Europe Halles we have gained collaborations with the university, the architecture faculty or people come to us exactly because they know Trans Europe Halles in Greece, you know, Greek people, they know Trans Europe Halles and they are happy to see that there is a Greek centre being in Trans Europe Halles and they are coming to us for collaborations because of that.'

In year 3 of FOI, Natassa was invited to be a coach in the SUSP and support a centre in Azerbaijan. Being invited to contribute to the network and SUSP in this way was very important to her.

'We are also participating in other capacities, for example, last summer, Trans Europe Halles invited me to be a coach for a centre in Azerbaijan. So I love how they gave me, they recognised my work as someone who can also guide other people into the network. So I would like to say that we feel that we are equal and that we are empowered by being in the network.'

Start Up Support Programme Key Achievements

- The strength of positive feedback from people who participated in the SUSP shows the satisfaction they had with the experience. The high regard for the consultants that participants had is an achievement that should be noted.
- The SUSP achieved working to support centres in regions with lower government support for culture and have expanded the reach of TEH members' sharing of expertise to regions that neighbour EU countries.

Start Up Support Programme Key Points of Learning and Reflection

- Considered against other strands of the CBP, the SUSP strand perhaps shows the strongest evidence of people utilising what they have gained from the programme in practice to effect longer term change.

3.3 Leadership Programme

Leadership Courses (Years 1 and 2)

In the first and second years of the CBP, 5-day residential leadership courses took place in Berlin, Germany (July 2018) and Fužine, Croatia (April 2019), open to both TEH members and non-members. The content of the courses focused on coaching and supporting people to develop awareness of their own personal barriers to leadership, rather than sharing information about models and theories of leadership. Each participant was offered a 2-hour online coaching session with the course leaders at a time to be arranged 3 months after the residential course. Evaluation involved written online questionnaires immediately following the courses, a follow-up questionnaire one year later and reflective evaluation meetings between TEH staff and evaluator. Although some people were not expecting a focus on the personal development aspects of leadership, the majority of those who gave feedback appreciated this focus and found the courses to be valuable to them. Comments from 4 different participants:

'The workshop was surprisingly personal. Instead of focusing on advice for better cultural management it put the emphasis on the personality of the leader. That was first a bit difficult but turned out to be a surprising and valuable experience for me.'

'For me, the leadership course was one of my best experiences last year. It gave me opportunity to meet with myself and gave me deep insight in me and group dynamics and feeling of connectivity.'

'I really appreciate approach to leadership based on genuine human relations.'

'The Leadership Workshop was a truly transformative experience. It was a true gift to come together with strong, engaged and inspiring people for a few days and let us connect back to ourselves while having the support of the group. It was a powerful reminder of how important it is for any leader to first and foremost start with themselves, incorporate self-care and mindfulness in the daily actions to be able to further the projects we are each working on.'

'It was a very different approach to leadership, compared to the most leadership courses, which for me suited very well, in the right moment of my personal development. It was also of great support to have such an open and honest environment to share each other's struggles, without feeling alone.'

Very few people took up the opportunity of the follow-up coaching, the most common reason given was that they were too busy or it was difficult to arrange. This also links to feedback that some people found it hard to act on what they had learnt during the workshop once they were back in their cultural centres. On person's reflection about implementing change or learning following events such as the leadership course is difficult:

'It is so difficult to sustain or keep going. I have witnessed many workshops where I experienced important moments and wanted to take them to the "real life". There is a sense of being in the bubble and then going back to reality... My question was for a long

time how to take that with you but now I see it that I take it as a seed planted in my being that takes time to grow.'

The metaphor of planting a seed is important to consider in understanding whether taking part in leadership courses enables longer-term change or impact for people. The one-year follow-up questionnaires were intended to gauge longer-term impact. Some of the Berlin participants did acknowledge longer-term change, for example:

'Looking at the workshop from a distance of one year, I see that the workshop marked the beginning of several substantial changes. Professionally – the workshop started a deeper process of reflecting on what had bothered me in my work relationships and kept from going further and used that experience to start a new project with a potential to transform these things both for myself and others. I also let go of several projects that previously seemed impossible to let go of. Personally – the last year has been filled with much more self-compassion and self-care than before, in which the workshop also played a big role.'

However, the Fužine one-year follow-up questionnaire responses showed little evidence that people had utilised learning from the courses in their work or that the courses had spurred longer-term change, with only one person giving a solid example of how they had used their learning in practice:

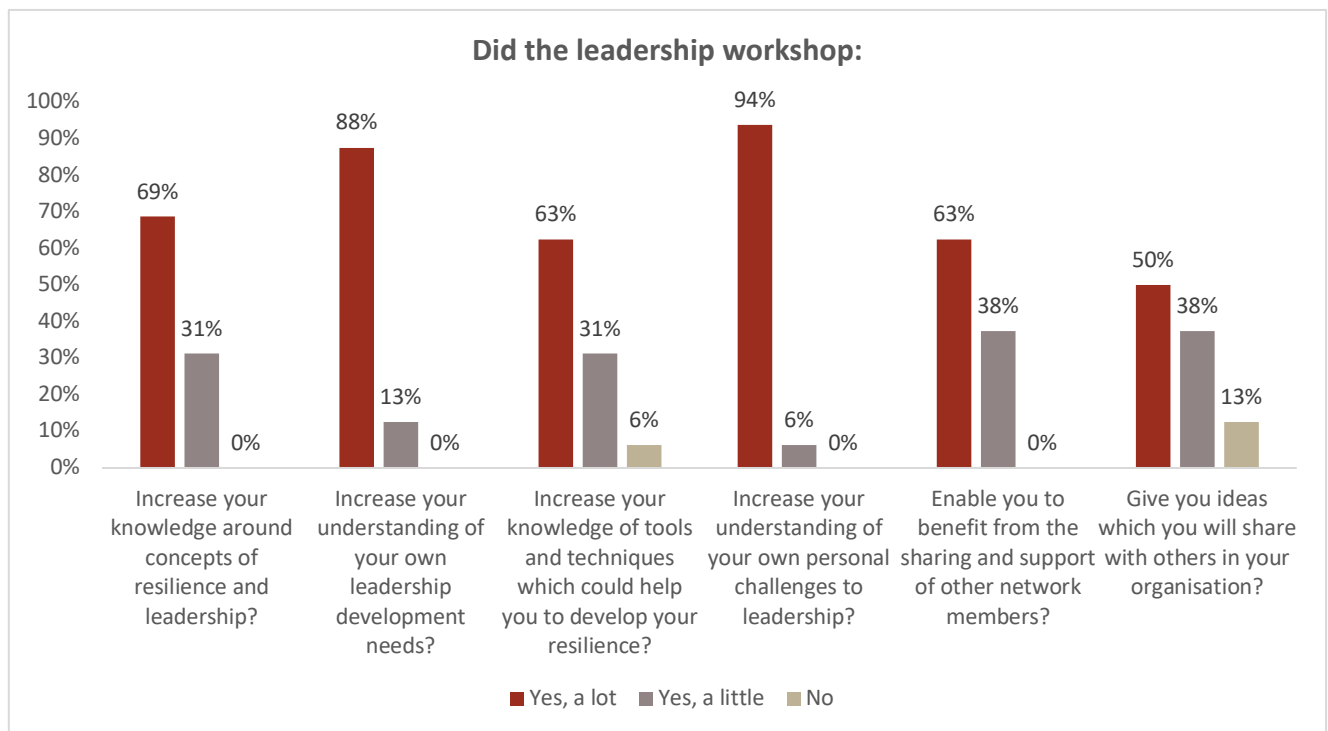
'I didn't go back to theories but I did apply a flat leadership model in my work with more awareness.'

What the responses to different questionnaires do show are that people recognise an inter-relatedness of personal development and wellbeing with professional effectiveness.

Online Leadership Workshops and Summer Course (Year 3)

Due to the coronavirus pandemic and many countries having restrictions on international travel, TEH designed leadership programme activities in 2020 to suit an online mode of delivery. The online workshops involved online group sessions for 30 people followed by each participant having individual coaching sessions with one of 3 tutors (all leading experts in the field of cultural leadership – Anja Wolters, Sue Kay and Emma Du Pree).

Compared to the residential leadership courses, responses to a questionnaire about the online course appear to show that people gained more knowledge of theoretical tools and techniques, in addition to the personal development aspects which were also retained. There were 16 responses (out of a total of 30 participants) which were evenly distributed amongst people who had worked with the different coaches. People were asked to respond to some closed questions with tick-box answer choices which show a high degree of learning:



In addition to the tick-box answer choices, people were also asked to *tell us more about this* which received 9 comments. Several people related their answer choices to COVID-19, for example: *'During Covid-era the course was just what we needed due to the multiplicity of challenges the creative industries face'*. Other comments demonstrate that the course achieved its intended effect for cultural workers in that they could see ways the things they learnt had a direct utility for their own situation:

'The course gave me a clearer understanding of leadership models and roles. It also introduced me to theoretical texts and practical exercises I can undertake. In particular, the leadership challenges I perceive are less to do with our organisation and more to do with different leadership models in statutory bodies we have to deal/negotiate with.'

One person suggested that a longer-term course structured to maintain connections with other participants would be beneficial:

'It would be great if the leadership course was more than just three sessions, and there was a way to keep the momentum with the other participants after it finished.'

Another comment highlights a theme in the Organisational Development strand of the CBP – translating business models for the cultural sector:

'I found myself challenged to think outside of the box and apply ideas from other sectors to ensure that we can enable sustainability within our organisations.'

One thing which has been difficult to evidence in the CBP evaluation is of individuals sharing their learning with others in their organisation. 14 out of 16 people said they had done this *a little* or *a lot*. The comments from the online Leadership Course provide stronger evidence of sharing learning than for the in-person year 1 and 2 courses.

People were asked: *of the different things you experienced during the course, what was most important, valuable or relevant to you and your work – and why?* Responses can all be grouped into 3 strong themes. Several people found the one-to-one coaching and the opportunity to talk about their own situation to be most important to them. There were many examples given of how the course enabled a focus on the person such as, *'discovering the real problem. I couldn't identify what was the main struggle, and I was confused. But now I know.'* The ideas about leadership which people gained from the course was the second theme, for example:

'The differences in leadership styles also the kinds of leadership required for different occasions.'

'The understanding that coaching and the techniques used can lead to better leadership.'

The third theme which showed what people valued most concerned understanding others' situations and feeling more connected with others in similar situations, for example:

'The conversations during the session with the group. It showed me that I am not alone, because it can seem so from time to time. The understanding from the other participants and openness to talk, I think that was so important.'

There were many positive comments and examples of how the course helped people to consider the next steps in their professional life, for example:

'Coupled with other activities TEH has offered and my own reflections and activities, I would say, it was an important element and a timely activity helping to see things clearer.'

All comments about the knowledge and expertise of the course facilitators were extremely complimentary and expressed gratitude. People's suggestions for improvement or development of the course included running the course over a longer time period to enable reflections in between sessions. Several people wished to have a longer-term mentoring relationship, for example:

'It was only one month in total i.e. 3 sessions I think it needs to be at least 3 months and we should have access to the trainers for the year in which you have taken the course.'

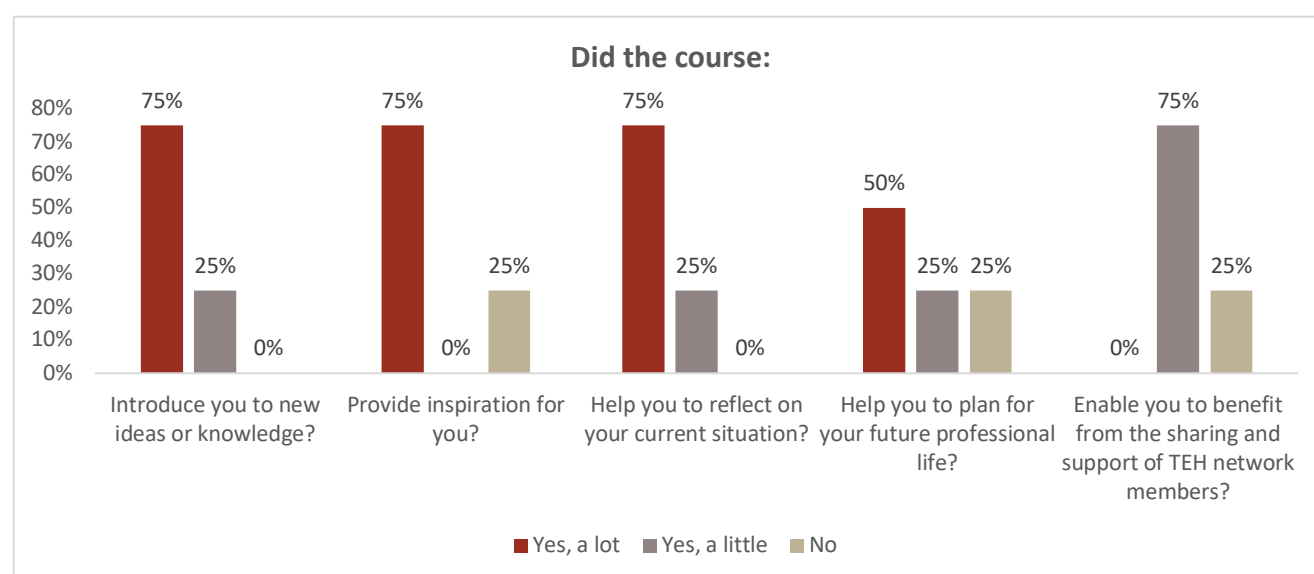
The final consideration from the online course is around gender. Participants were asked to state their gender as the leadership courses in years 1 and 2 were predominantly attended by females, and a reflective discussion between the evaluator and TEH staff about why this might be included thoughts that males were more confident in leadership than females, or that they had a propensity to think they were natural leaders. Although there was a reasonably balanced gender split amongst the online course questionnaire respondents (9 female, 7 male, 2 self-described or preferred not to say) issues around gender were evident in some questionnaire comments. One comment about improvements for future courses said: *'more of this kind. Less of wise old men speaking of "how to run shit"'*. Another comment adds to the speculation about reasons

for higher proportions of females taking part in leadership development – that males do not recognise that they could benefit from leadership development as they have more confidence in their abilities:

'I knew and know I need help to lead. Which is a new thing. Before, and most likely for a lot of men, this would have been in my head "I can fix this myself, and I don't have the time to dwell in this soft stuff".'

Across the questionnaire responses, it was apparent that participants' personal lives and their emotional responses to situations affected their professional lives. People appreciated the opportunity of working with a one-to-one coach to explore these issues more. Achieving the right balance of addressing issues in people's personal lives and providing knowledge about theories, models and toolkits in the CBP leadership strand has been an ongoing conversation in the CBP evaluation.

The Summer Course was a series of 4 online events in July and August 2020, not planned at the start of Year 3 but developed in response to network members' needs and the circumstances caused by COVID-19. Although response rates to an online questionnaire about the Summer Course were low (4 responses from 28 registrations for the 4 sessions) the patterns of responses were similar to the online leadership workshop closed questions:



The qualitative comments people gave echo the responses in the online leadership workshop questionnaire. Key themes are perfectly summarised in these 2 comments:

'The knowledge shared by the 3 presenters was very valuable and inspiring and will accompany me on my professional and personal level. Different ways of working and being aware of oneself and our surroundings. It was great, thanks a lot!'

'Mainly in a form of inspiration to deepen the connection of the cultural, educational and political work that we are doing with the spiritual aspect. It was encouraging to know that there are more people "out there" who practice that and address the issues of our time with focus on relationships (also with the more-than-human actors).'

The first comment notes the quality of the presenters, that the event provided inspiration and highlights the balance between personal and professional. The second comment again mentions inspiration, and well as the importance of having connections and relationships with others.

People were asked *did the course give you ideas which you will share with others in your organisation?* Responses were *yes, a lot* for one person and *yes, a little* for 2 others. The additional comments again echo a theme which keep occurring in the CBP evaluation – that people find it difficult to make the time to share and implement what they have learnt once they are back working in their organisations. Responses to the question of *the different things you experienced during the course, what was most important, valuable or relevant to you and your work – and why?* reiterate themes already mentioned – the balance between personal and professional, making time for reflection and the importance of relationships.

Bottom-up Leadership Workshops (Year 4)

Responding to the needs of network members and the continuing uncertainty of international travel due to the pandemic, Leadership Programme activities in year 4 were re-formulated as the Bottom-up Leadership Programme. There was an open call for TEH member organisations to apply for a 600 Euro subsidy to host a leadership workshop for their staff and/or communities. The parameters of the open call offered some flexibility: the workshop could be either online or onsite, a half-day or full-day workshop, focus on a topic related to leadership selected by the organisation, be led by a coach of their choice, a closed workshop for staff only or open to other community members (with or without a fee to participate). Suggestions for workshop topics were made (resilience & wellbeing; leadership during and post Covid-19; participatory governance; social inclusion; sustainable development goals; change management) or organisations could select their own topic.

The CBP evaluator created questions organisations could use to get evaluation feedback from people who took part in the workshop. Out of the 16 organisations who were selected for the programme, 14 gathered feedback and provided an evaluation summary for TEH. A total of 152 people took part overall.

Organisations chose workshop leaders that inspired them – people who were highly regarded in the cultural sector and for their leadership experience. They chose people whose focus was particularly relevant to the priorities of their organisation, for example, Beat Carnival wished to focus on developing leadership for young people in their organisation so they chose a young social entrepreneur for their workshop, **Alice Thompson**, whilst Anibar chose Chris Keulemans as he had a good understanding of their organisation from his work as their consultant for the Start-up Support Programme.

Many organisations used the opportunity of a Bottom-up Leadership workshop to support discussion about cultural leadership across their organisations. This was an approach that contrasted with previous leadership courses that focused on learning and

development for individuals, with an intent that it would then radiate or be disseminated within their organisations. From the evaluation evidence collected, it seems that implementing and sharing learning with others in one's cultural centre from the individual-focused courses happened in a limited way or not at all for some participants. Whilst the leadership courses for individuals were valued, the potential for change and learning within organisations more widely is greater with the Bottom-up Leadership style of workshop. Another difference was that organisations took a very broad view of cultural leadership in the topics they chose to explore through their workshops.

Creating a structure of leadership development which enabled each organisation to tailor workshops to their organisational values was an important aspect of the Bottom-up Leadership Programme. Many TEH member organisations have strong values around commoning and working in non-hierarchical ways. The quote below from an evaluation form shows the importance of TEH supporting leadership development that is consistent with organisational structures and values.

'Finding common ground, leaving space for emotion, and celebrating! These are some of the things I'm most interested in when it comes to commoning; they're actually skills that as a society we don't foster, as we tend to prioritise competitiveness, logical thinking, speed, effectiveness and rigor.'

From the organisations who requested feedback from people who participated in their workshops, there was a widespread sense of satisfaction that the workshops were useful, and they had learnt about leadership relevant to their work. With such a diversity of workshops, however, there was a variety in what people gained from taking part. For one organisation, people valued the participatory nature of the workshop, and that the facilitator personalised the workshop for the organisation and to each member of the team. Several people commented that the opportunity for in-person discussion was very necessary for them as it had been so long since that was possible, and they wished to do more workshops like this more regularly. A second organisation used the opportunity of the Bottom-up Leadership workshop to kick-start their own continuing, in-house, leadership development programme. The people who participated in this workshop felt they learnt more about listening, how to question, conflict resolution, more aware of their own personal values that they bring to leadership. A third organisation focused their workshop on intercultural communication. What participants in this workshop valued was how it helped them to understand others' viewpoints and foster good relationships essential to cultural leadership and participatory decision making. They also appreciated the creative methods used in the workshop such as drama techniques and an interactive board game 'Sociopoly'. A fourth organisation used the subsidy towards a leadership retreat where workshops involved using established tools such as SWOT analysis and agreeing SMART objectives. Participants in the retreat felt that it helped them to develop their own style of leadership, focus on sustainability for their organisation, create a vision for the future of the organisation, and to develop bonding and personal relationships within their team. These are four examples of what people and organisations gained from the workshops. Amongst the other cultural centres, common benefits of their workshops were improving communication skills, team

building, wellbeing and personal resilience, and spending time as a team to discuss issues relevant to how their organisation is led.

'The work that just begun in here is significant for the organisation with so many different ecosystems. There have been no previous attempts to create a code of conduct in such a structural manner. This is the beginning of the new chapter in the history of our centre. We are building a stronger community by taking these actions.'

'Overall the workshop, even though it was short it was beyond my expectations and very useful for me it was also a boost of energy for the upcoming months after a very difficult year.'

'The workshop came at a time that was much needed, and the way it was organized brought a reminder to the things small or big within the organisation serving as an energizer for the upcoming period. I think that one important aspect from this workshop was that each one of the staff members came out of the workshop with something that they want to do more of, as well as discussions that will need to happen after it.'

Responding to an evaluation question about how the Bottom-up Leadership workshops could be improved, it was common for people to comment that a longer time for the workshop would be beneficial and that organising workshops like this more often would help them in their work.

Members' reflections on the various Leadership Programme activities feature in several of the Case Studies. Amongst those who contributed to the case studies, 2 people had participated in the year 3 online leadership course and 2 others worked for centres who had hosted Bottom-up leadership workshops in year 4.

The online leadership course participants had contrasting experiences. 'Anna' (a pseudonym as she wished to be anonymous) did not find the course provided what she hoped for. Anna's leadership role is as a voluntary board member in a cultural centre which has a non-hierarchical organisational structure. She felt that the online leadership course was not so relevant to her situation as there is no 'classic' leadership in her centre, therefore she could not see how what she was learning could be put into practice. Anna noted that many TEH member centres have non-hierarchical structures, so she was disappointed that the course did not meet her needs. A second point raised through Anna's case study is that although she was introduced to new ideas through the group discussion, resources provided and the one-to-one coaching sessions, she was not able to make the time to follow-up on her new learning within the demands of her board member role and other work. This echoes other feedback from online and in-person leadership courses – it is very difficult to implement learning from leadership courses into day-to-day work. Anna's suggestion of how TEH could develop future leadership programmes may be one way this could be addressed. She suggested mentoring or coaching over a longer period of time (again, something suggested by others in the written evaluation forms). Anna also felt group coaching for her centre's board would be valuable. The Bottom-up Leadership Programme in year 4 was a way to respond to this need for organisations to have leadership development tailored to their centre's

needs. Anna's centre was not one of those who took part in this opportunity, although it could have been a way for them to try the group coaching Anna felt was needed.

Mary, however, found the online leadership course very valuable. Considered alongside Anna's experience, it is interesting to note that Mary's position in her centre (Artistic Director and CEO with a responsibility for managing staff) is more of a 'classic' leadership role that contrasts to Anna. What Mary gained from the leadership course was mentorship and more understanding of different leadership styles. Taking part came at a transitional time for her organisation when she had just secured a 30-year lease for the building following 5 years of negotiations. Following this busy practical phase of negotiating the lease, the leadership course was a valued opportunity for her to *'talk about ideas and be a little bit more philosophical and searching [which] was actually really useful for me'*. She recognised that this might seem *'a little fuzzy'* rather than provided her with practical solutions to real challenges. The one-to-one coaching session was an important element of the course for Mary.

'It was actually a relief just to chat and throw ideas out. And Sue [the leadership coach], she kept saying to bring it back to me. And I had realised I had just, as leader, had completely ignored my own needs and requirements for a long time. And that was very impactful because I was oblivious. It was quite a realisation in the one-to-one session, if you're going to be a good leader, you need to work on yourself as well.'

The resources provided by the facilitators were also useful to Mary. She spoke about being in the final stages of writing her PhD thesis and that she intended to go back to the course bibliography and weave some of the references into some chapters of her thesis.

The Bottom-up Leadership workshops feature in the Communitism (Natassa) and L'Asilo (Gabriella) Case Studies. Communitism used the Bottom-up Leadership subsidy towards a 3-day leadership retreat. The facilitator they chose to work with devised the structure and content of the retreat in response to the group's needs and wishes. Natassa reflected on how forming a legal association had thrust her into a hierarchical leadership role that was not consistent with Communitism's values of non-hierarchical structures and collective decision making. The leadership retreat enabled the group to work through this issue with a facilitator and for Natassa's wish for *'space for many leaders within Communitism'* to be realised. Natassa viewed the leadership retreat as a pivotal moment for developing the groups' ethos around leadership, but she recognised that it was a *'pit-stop'*, a *'milestone for the evolution of the association'* and that Communitism would continue to work with a coach to develop leadership further for the benefit of the cultural centre and association.

In L'Asilo's Case Study, Gabriella spoke about how the Bottom-up Leadership workshop was the first time L'Asilo had been able to benefit from what the Capacity Building Programme offered, as previous opportunities were not consistent with L'Asilo's values and commitment to commoning and non-hierarchical ways of working. Gabriella observed a shift in the mindset of the TEH co-ordination office over the life of Factories of Imagination from supporting cultural centres to adapt the 'top-down' models of the

business sector, which were contrary to L'Asilo's needs, to activities like the Bottom-up Leadership workshops that accommodated the values of their cultural centre.

'Everything was trying to teach those cultural people to reason through mission, vision and objectives – which doesn't really fit because culture is something that moves physiologically and is an organic activity.'

The value of the Bottom-up leadership workshop to L'Asilo was that the opportunity was flexible enough that it could support leadership development within their ways of working: they used the subsidy for a workshop on participatory governance.

Leadership Programme Key Achievements and Learning

- The content of leadership courses/workshops combining a focus on both personal development and professional actions should be retained for future work. People appreciate the combination of personal development and increasing their knowledge of theories, tools and techniques for leadership
- Adapting the Leadership Programme activities to an online mode of delivery worked well and widened participation to include people who would never have afforded the time or costs of a week-long residential course.
- Many TEH member organisations have flat non-hierarchical organisational structures and decision making. Leadership programme activities should be flexible enough to be relevant to different kinds of leadership roles members have. The Bottom-up Leadership workshops were a successful adaptation that responded directly to members' needs and enabled centres to tailor leadership development to their local situation.
- TEH should maintain an awareness of issues of gender in leadership development – understanding that it is common for males and females to have different perspectives of leadership and have different expectations and needs regarding leadership development activities TEH could provide.
- The difficulty of utilising learning in practice from the individual personal development focused courses could be given more consideration. Including aspects of longer-term mentoring or coaching could be useful way to support people's leadership development. This may be something TEH could incorporate into future leadership programmes.

3.4 Arts Education Platform

The Arts Education Platform (AEP) was a fifth strand of the CBP in years 1, 2 and 3. A programme of activities included workshops at TEH conferences and camp meetings, 3 annual Arts Education Seminars (Gothenburg, Belfast and Esch) and study visits. All the planned activities and outputs were fulfilled, except for some study visits in year 3 which were not possible due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

AEP members documented and evaluated many of the activities independently of the FOI CBP evaluation framework. The group created videos and written reports which summarise the AEP's activities and consider the value of the network to different members through interviews. The reports reflect on practical issues of organising events to improve future gatherings and capture participants' satisfaction with the content and structure of events. Over the programme, several different methods were used to gather evidence but perhaps the most insightful source of data comes from an interview by the evaluator with Fred Entringer of Kulturfabrik for a case study.

Fred had been involved in FOI as a member of the AEP steering group and had been one of the visitors in the Staff Exchange Programme in 2019. He spoke about how important it was for the AEP members to have time to do a mapping of different arts education methodologies and to acquire understanding other members' ways of working and values. The AEP created a structure for that sharing and understanding of methodologies to develop, and for the network to get a '*global picture*' of arts education activity across the network. Taking time to understand the realities of different countries and cities was important. By the third seminar, Fred felt the AEP had reached a place where there was a concrete understanding of these things. An ambition to undertake collaborative cross-border projects could then be realised, but it had taken 3 years to create the relationships and partnerships between organisations to turn the ambition into a plan for tangible work. The work the AEP had done in the first 3 years of FOI had enabled the group to develop a plan for longer-term sustainability and further collaborative work with the support of Erasmus+ funding. From September 2020 the AEP becoming TEH's Arts Education Hub, supported by Erasmus+, is a tangible outcome for the work in years 1 to 3 of FOI. The FOI Capacity Building Programme provided a springboard for the AEP to move on to a new level of collaboration.

On an individual level, Fred spoke about the positive impact of the AEP on his professional development. He appreciated that his situation in Luxembourg was '*privileged*' as a small well-funded country with good political support for cultural activities. The project had given him a different perspective and more understanding of the realities and challenges faced by others. The relationships he made during the project were also beneficial:

'...definitely being part of the platform and have this human contact with people for me it was the most valuable thing – to go into the seminars, to participate in online meetings, participate in the workshops during the conferences, that's brought me a lot of information and inspiration to do my work better than I was doing before.'

The human element of personal exchange was the thing Fred valued most about the AEP.

'I think it's about being in contact with people. People who are really aware of the situation in their own world. They are asking themselves the good questions and, for me, everything is about human contact. With the platform I think we have the feeling we are more than just logos exchanging with different interests or just people as a name. ... it's really good to see there is real people like you with real values and missions, for me it's a privilege.'

Fred also commented on the importance of the AEP for Kulturfabrik as an organisation. He felt that Kulturfabrik was previously focused on working on a regional level and in the city of Esch – not on an international level. Involvement with FOI and TEH had '*made our bubble bigger*' by bringing a different perspective and had given Kulturfabrik a European visibility.

Arts Education Platform Key Achievements and Learning

- The Arts Education Platform has flourished into a distinct thematic hub of TEH, supported by Erasmus+ funding since September 2020. The groundwork for this funding was laid by the work AEP members did as part of FOI's Capacity Building Programme. The Arts Education Hub has created sustainability for the groups' work and enabled ambitions to collaborate on projects to be realised.
- The importance of time to developing partnerships and working relationships needs to be acknowledged.

4. CONSIDERING THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Following the presentation of evaluation evidence gathered, this section of the report offers an interpretation of how the evidence relates to the questions the evaluation process sought to answer, which are:

1. To what extent has FOI Capacity Building Programme achieved its intended aims, objectives and outcomes?
2. What is the value of the programme to individuals who have taken part, their organisations, network members as a group, and the TEH co-ordination office?
3. What are the key successes, challenges and learning from the project?
4. How does the TEH co-ordination office respond to formative evaluation findings and network members' needs, to review and develop the programme?

To what extent has FOI Capacity Building Programme achieved its intended aims, objectives and outcomes?

Target numbers for participation were exceeded in all 4 years of the project.

In all 4 years of FOI, target participation numbers were exceeded, even in years 3 and 4 where some planned activities were postponed or moved online because of the pandemic.

Overall, the Capacity Building Programme is judged to be successful at achieving its aims, all the output-based objectives and most of the intended outcomes for individual cultural workers and organisations.

Judgements about achievement of outcomes from the evidence gathered is that the CBP activities have achieved change for individuals and organisations, although for some elements of the programme evidence of organisational change is weaker. Within the Leadership Programme, feedback showed that the leadership courses were effective at achieving their intended outcomes for the individual participants, but when participants were followed-up several months after the courses, the personal change they had experienced had rarely extended to implementing change within their organisations. A similar picture emerged for some of the Business Model and Organisational Development workshops earlier on in the 4 years – people valued their learning, but they found it difficult to implement it in their cultural centres. However, later in the 4-year period, Business Model and Organisational Development activities were more effective at helping people to make change within their organisations – the Penguins Project and the Shared Recovery Programme were two examples. The Start-up Support Programme was very effective at helping cultural workers make meaningful change regarding stabilising organisations and creating more sustainable working practices.

The kinds of change the CBP enabled fall into 2 categories. Firstly, some elements of the CBP offered people knowledge, advice and tools they could use in their work to make practical changes and take immediate action. An example of this includes the SUSP

consultants offering advice about how to improve day-to-day efficiency and facilitating workshops to discuss strategy. The second category of change is more intangible but just as important to people who took part in FOI. Supporting resilience and strengthening cultural workers' capacity to fulfil their roles came from the activities which focused on personal development, wellbeing, and the connection and support people give and receive from others in the network. Examples of this second category are the leadership courses, the Penguin Project and the Shared Recovery Programme.

A further categorisation of how the CBP enacted change is the building of resilience and capacity of individual cultural workers and also organisations. Some activities, such as the leadership courses in years 1, 2 and 3, had a focus on the individual. Other activities, such as the SUSP, were more clearly focused on addressing change for a whole organisation. Furthermore, some activities, such as the SRP involved support for individuals with explicit intentions of impacting on organisations. Throughout the evaluation, the interconnection of the personal and professional, and the individual and the collective, arose in how people spoke of CBP activities. An awareness of this interconnection is valuable in considering the extent to which the CBP has achieved objectives and intended outcomes and, just as importantly, *how* the programme has achieved these things so that future work can build on an understanding of how programme objectives are met.

What is the value of the programme to individuals who have taken part, their organisations, network members as a group, and the TEH co-ordination office?

There is an ongoing need for professional development amongst the cultural workforce

Although the CBP is a programme within a time-limited funding stream, the effects of the CBP activities are an ongoing process. The professional development and the enriching experiences the TEH network provides are not a time-limited project which will ever be completed. Within a network as large as TEH with a diversity of organisational structures, people need different things at different times in their development – maintaining the coverage and range of activities to meet all these different needs is a challenge. Supporting cultural workers' professional development is an ongoing need which will never be finished – new cultural centres join the network, new personnel join organisations or need ongoing support and development to respond to new challenges and share evolving ways of working. Members frequently use food metaphors to describe the effects of TEH events – they get intellectual nourishment from the sharing of knowledge and experience. The particular nature of TEH member cultural centres (artist and activist-led) means that the personal commitment of individuals to their centre creates a high level of burn-out. Members identify that the intellectual nourishment they get from the CBP activities is important in supporting them in their cultural worker roles.

Peer learning and outside expertise both valued

Early in the evaluation process it was understood that members valued a balance of 2 methods of professional development and support: engaging professionals with specific expertise to work with network members (such as in the Leadership course and Start-up Support Programme) AND through peer-learning and sharing (the focus of the AEP and Organisational Develop activities such as the Penguins Project). This understanding meant the CBP maintained a focus of providing a balance of these 2 types of learning.

Relationships and human connection are really important

A theme which occurred across all strands of the programme is the importance of human connections and the relationships which people create through their participation in the CBP and the network. This is something which people value highly about TEH activities.

What are the key successes, challenges and learning from the project?

Successes:

The development of the Arts Education Platform into the Arts Education Hub

The Arts Education Platform was a strand of the CBP in 2017 but has flourished into a distinct thematic hub of TEH, supported by Erasmus+ funding since September 2020. The activities of the AEP strand highlight the necessity of long-term stability in network activities. Reflections of AEP members noted that it took 3 years of gatherings and activities to strengthen the network and create the relationships necessary to take forward tangible plans to enact cross-border collaborative projects.

Digital ways of working have enhanced participation

The FOI application to Creative Europe originally included developing online courses in year 2 of the project. This happened in a limited way – some videos were made by a network member and uploaded to Vimeo – but their reach was small. Developing digital learning was not given much focus or resources. It was only when the pandemic necessitated virtual working that the TEH co-ordination office embraced digital platforms for CBP activities and thereafter online provision was good. In some cases (such as the online leadership course) online events widened participation and enabled access to activities which would not have been possible for some people with only in-person participation.

Being internationally networked has local benefits for cultural centres

Being internationally networked has local benefits for cultural centres. For the Start-up Support Programme organisations, who not only valued the expertise, advice and support of the consultants they've worked with, but also appreciate the gravitas that being part of Trans Europe Halles brings to their negotiations with municipal authorities

and landlords. Trans Europe Halles' reputation opens doors to new collaborations and opportunities for network members which benefits centres at a local level. These benefits are not just within the SUSP but extend to other strands of the programme (the Arts Education Platform and Business Model Development strand).

Challenges:

Whilst much has been achieved, evaluation is a critical process, therefore a focus on what has been difficult about the programme or has not been achieved needs attention.

No distinctive identity for FOI and the Capacity Building Programme

An issue raised through the evaluation process throughout the 4-year project, is that FOI did not develop a distinctive identity which network members recognised. Network members engaged in the different strands which were relevant to their interests, but they did not seem to have a sense of FOI as a cohesive programme or an awareness of the different strands of work. One reason for this may be that the Capacity Building Director for years 1 and 2 felt strongly that CBP activities should be integrated into TEH activities and not 'badged' as a distinct project, as he felt that reduced participation. However, the CBP marketing and communications did not appear to change from that position even later in the programme. This appears to contrast with other projects TEH are involved in which have a strong identity, for example, Creative Lenses.

The permeability between TEH projects is a challenge for evaluating impact

Whilst the scope of the evaluation is activities within the 5 strands of the CBP, the themes which demonstrate value to network members may not be limited to the CBP activities – they could, in part, be attributed to other FOI objectives such as the Staff Exchange Programme or other TEH activities. Some members who contributed to the evaluation observed that distinctions between one type of network activity and another were artificial – members took part in elements of different programmes depending on their needs and interests and were not concerned with how activities were structured for the purposes of funding applications. There is a permeability between CBP activities and other activities of the TEH network, making evaluating the impact of just the CBP challenging.

Evaluation of longer-term impacts is sparse for some elements of the CBP

Evidence has been gathered which shows good levels of satisfaction in the CBP activities for all strands, but evidence of tangible longer-term impacts is weak for some elements of the programme (in particular, the workshops at conferences and camp meetings).

Other learning:

‘Translating’ for the cultural sector is core to CBP activities

Network members spoke of a need to translate the practices of the business sector for the cultural sector – something which the CBP is helping to do. People felt that learning how to adapt the models and practices of business to make them relevant to cultural workers and centres was very much needed. This ‘translation’ concerns going beyond just developing a new vocabulary for the creative sector, but involves developing organisation structures and working practices that are consistent with the values of members which are often outside of traditional organisational hierarchies.

How does the TEH co-ordination office respond to formative evaluation findings and network members’ needs, to review and develop the programme?

The CBP responded to networks members’ contributions whilst retaining the overall FOI goals

The CBP responded flexibly to members’ needs and the expertise they could contribute to the network, yet the programme stayed within the framework set out in the original application. The co-ordination office adapted the CBP activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic both in terms of what support the programme offered cultural centres and workers, and how the programme activities were delivered. TEH ensured that the CBP was relevant to members’ evolving professional development needs. There was a swift transition to online events at the start of the pandemic and TEH used online platforms for events and workshops effectively.

The Penguin Project is an example of how the CBP has adapted to harness the expertise of network members. TEH have confidently revised some planned CBP activities whilst retaining the original goals. This demonstrates an ability to innovate, share, learn and develop the programme to benefit from the strengths of network members. Although the CBP has remained within the broad structure defined at the outset, it has not been wedded to original plans which shows an adaptive resilience to react to changing influences.

The overall conclusion of the evaluation is that the CBP made a valuable contribution towards the aims of supporting resilience for individuals and organisations. This seems particularly crucial at a time when the global pandemic has tested resilience beyond measure. Additionally, the pandemic has shown the CBP itself to be resilient to change and agile in how it has responded to limits on international travel and public gatherings, with positive outcomes for participation.

5. OVERALL KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND KEY POINTS OF LEARNING

Although somewhat repetitious, the discussion in the *Considering the evaluation questions* section of the report has been distilled into 8 statements to help TEH share the main conclusions from the evaluation with others. These statements feature in the factsheet that summarises the FOI Capacity Building Programme.

- The cultural workforce has an ongoing need for professional development and intellectual nourishment that they get from the sharing of knowledge and experience with other network members. The relationships and human connections that are enabled through Capacity Building Programme activities are very important to members, supporting their wellbeing and helping them to do their work better.
- Peer learning from other network members and outside expertise are both valued by members – TEH should continue to support a balance of both kinds of professional development for cultural workers.
- Being internationally networked has local benefits for cultural centres, particularly for the Start-up Support Programme organisations who not only value the expertise, advice and support of the consultants they've worked with, but also appreciate the gravitas that being part of Trans Europe Halles brings to their negotiations with municipal authorities and landlords.
- 'Translating' business sector practices for the cultural sector is core to CBP activities – adapting business models goes beyond developing a new vocabulary but involves transforming organisational structures and working practices in a way consistent with the values of members which are often counter to traditional organisational hierarchies.
- Cultural workers value the different approaches to leadership development the CBP has offered. Leadership courses and workshops that focus on individuals' personal development are valued, although the majority of people find it difficult to then utilise their learning in their cultural centres. The approach of the Bottom-up Leadership workshops, where member organisations host local workshops and select a leadership topic and coach, was very effective. Cultural centres selected a wide range of leadership development topics and workshop formats that were specific and relevant to their current needs and individual situations.
- It is important to members that the values they bring to running their cultural centres are also considered in the TEH network activities (for example: peer-learning, commoning, non-hierarchical organisational structures).
- The CBP itself has been resilient to change and agile in how it has responded to limits on international travel and public gatherings. Although digital ways of working have enhanced participation, it was the necessity caused by COVID-19 that spurred the move to online learning and participation.

- The CBP was managed by the TEH co-ordination office effectively: the programme responded to network members' contributions, enabling them to shape programme activities whilst also retaining and meeting the overall FOI goals.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT WITHIN TEH

At the time of completing the FOI Capacity Building Programme evaluation report (January 2022), TEH have received confirmation of a successful Creative Europe funding application that will support the network's activities for 3 more years. The CBP evaluator was involved in developing the grant application, contributing evaluation evidence to support the proposed plans for the new project and inputting into the evaluation strategy. As there has been regular formative evaluation throughout the FOI CBP and evidence and findings have been considered in developing the next phase of the network, the recommendations in this section of the report will not be a surprise to TEH co-ordination office staff, but are a reminder of important elements of the programme that should remain at the forefront of developing future work.

- Capacity building activities should continue with balance of sharing of expertise and experience that exists with the network membership with utilising facilitators from outside of the network.
- How the network is managed should maintain awareness of members' values, for example, non-hierarchical organisational structures and decision making, the importance of human relationships, care for the wellbeing of individual cultural workers etc., to ensure that network activities are consistent with these values.
- Factories of Imagination is the first time TEH have worked with an external evaluator. Whilst it has been a fruitful process, there is potential to embed evaluation more into the programme and strive to involve the network in evaluation at different levels, for example, ExCom members and cultural workers in centres. Future projects that have resources for an external evaluator could benefit from a greater collaborative (or even participatory) evaluation process.

7. CONCLUSION

The evaluation report has summarised how the Factories of Imagination Capacity Building Programme has contributed to cultural centres' development over the life of the programme. Importantly, the evaluation has also identified what network members value about the programme and how network activities achieve the benefits they do. The evaluation concludes that TEH have successfully adapted the programme to the evolving needs of members and the extra-ordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic. This report has been completed following confirmation that TEH have been successful in securing further Creative Europe funding for 3 years to develop the work of Factories of Imagination. The evaluation process has gathered feedback from network members that has contributed to formative evaluation and prompted adaptations to the format and content of the programme strands, where appropriate. The final summative evaluation report concludes that the CBP met its objectives, reached the numbers of intended participants and has been greatly valued by cultural workers that were involved.

8. REFERENCES

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: integrating theory and practice*. Los Angeles: Sage.

APPENDIX ONE: INTENDED PROJECT OUTCOMES

BUSINESS MODEL DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND START-UP SUPPORT			
	Short-term / instant outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Longer-term outcomes
INDIVIDUAL	<p>People will have acquired new knowledge of different business models and organisational development strategies, for example: value and purpose driven development, strategic planning, governance models, models of engaging local communities, facilitating stakeholder engagement, blockchain technology.</p> <p>People are inspired and/or motivated to share their learning with their organisations.</p> <p>People feel that they have increased skills, expertise and resources to implement change in their organisations due to their increased knowledge.</p>	<p>People have increased understanding of business models and organisational development strategies <u>relevant to their organisations</u>.</p> <p>People have shared their learning within their organisations.</p>	<p>People feel that they have been able to influence change in their organisations.</p>

ORGANISATIONAL	n/a	<p>Organisations have utilised the new knowledge, skills and expertise of individuals.</p> <p>Organisations have created strategies or have tangible plans for implementing change which draws on the increased knowledge, skills, expertise and resources of individuals who have taken part in FOI.</p>	<p>Some cultural centres will have made changes to their business model and organisational practices with the aim of increasing their organisational resilience.</p> <p>Some cultural centres will be able to evidence increased organisational resilience.</p>
NETWORK	<p>Network members have shared and benefited from knowledge exchange with other network members.</p> <p>TEH co-ordination office has greater understanding of the needs of network members regarding BMD and OD.</p>	<p>Network activities continue to provide knowledge exchange.</p> <p>TEH has a suite of tools and resources to support the network regarding BMD and OD.</p>	<p>Relationships are sustained through network activities and continue to provide knowledge exchange.</p> <p>TEH consolidates the tools and resources, and its work to support the network cements its role in European cultural networks.</p>

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME			
	Short-term / instant outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Longer-term outcomes
INDIVIDUAL	<p>People have more knowledge of leadership theories and models.</p> <p>People have greater understanding of their own personal barriers to leadership.</p>	<p>People have developed their new knowledge into understanding of how these theories and models are relevant to their work.</p> <p>People's learning and personal change initiated by the programme has made them more effective in their leadership roles and increased their individual resilience.</p>	<p>LP network members will have influenced organisational change in their cultural centres which has been enhanced or facilitated by their involvement in the LP.</p> <p>LP network members feel more confident and able to flourish in their leadership roles.</p>
ORGANISATIONAL	n/a	<p>Organisations are better able to cope with challenges (bounce-back resilience) and plan for the future (bounce-forward resilience) due to the leadership development of individuals in their organisations.</p>	<p>Organisations are better able to cope with challenges (bounce-back resilience) and plan for the future (bounce-forward resilience) due to the leadership development of individuals in their organisations.</p>
NETWORK	<p>LP network members have benefited from the sharing and support of other network members.</p> <p>TEH has greater understanding of the needs of network members regarding leadership development.</p>	<p>The network is strengthened due to the sharing and support LP network members experience.</p> <p>TEH has further refined its leadership development resources and programmes of work, including gaining a wider pool of coaches and experts who can support and contribute to the programmes.</p>	<p>Relationships are sustained through network activities and continue to provide support and exchange regarding leadership development.</p> <p>TEH's role in European cultural networks and leadership development programmes is consolidated and strengthened.</p>

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND ARTS EDUCATION			
	Short-term / instant outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Longer-term outcomes
INDIVIDUAL	Arts educators will have increased knowledge, skills, expertise, resources and professional networks due to the training, study visits and knowledge exchange activities.	Arts educators will have utilised their learning to review their work and plan strategies for development.	Arts Educators implement strategies and practices developed through knowledge sharing in FOI programmes and workshops to influence and develop their organisations.
ORGANISATIONAL	n/a	Organisations place increased value on the contribution of arts educators and/or arts education activities.	<p>Some arts educators will have influenced change in their cultural centres which increases the resilience of arts education work and organisations as a whole.</p> <p>Some cultural centres will be able to evidence increased organisational resilience – in particular, their arts education work will be strengthened by increased tools for evaluation and learning.</p> <p>Some cultural centres will have involved new or more audiences due to the arts education work FOI has initiated or supported.</p>

NETWORK	<p>Arts educators have benefited from the sharing and support of other network members.</p> <p>TEH has greater understanding of the needs of network members regarding arts education activities.</p>	<p>The network is strengthened due to the sharing and support of arts educators' network members.</p> <p>TEH has further refined the Arts Education Platform activities and programmes of work.</p>	<p>Relationships are sustained through network activities and continue to provide support and exchange regarding arts education.</p> <p>TEH's role in European cultural networks and arts education knowledge exchange is consolidated and strengthened.</p>
----------------	---	---	--