

“Youth Organizations for Unification & Innovation”

A collaborative project co-funded by the Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in the field of youth

Summary report - 2017 > 2022



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1. Background and objectives

Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) are one of the European Union's main employers ... They employ 3,3% of the active population (5 times more than Telecommunications) and constitute a vital force in economic growth. They hire, on average, more people in the 15-to-29 age range than any other sector.

The economic growth and job creation within this sector is attracting a growing number of young entrepreneurs. However, a large number of candidates are "stuck", due to choices in career development that no longer suit them, and to employment circumstances that are more and more demanding (changing economic models, lower pay, dwindling social benefits, new distribution circuits, globalization ...)

We, as mentors, would like these young cultural and creative entrepreneurs to be able to run their own businesses, properly structure their projects and proposals, secure meaningful professional experience, and, above all, satisfy a goal of personal fulfillment.

To do so, it's necessary to reinforce alliances between different official and non-official educational systems, and create innovative and unconventional guidance methods based on the inevitability of change, the need to adapt, and development methods of self-assessment, all while gaining autonomy. It's also crucial to create strong bonds between the various players of the creative ecosystem: businesses, associations, education systems, public politics, collective creation spaces, etc.

The objective of this project is to further develop the competence and capacity of the guides who would be helping our audience of young cultural and creative entrepreneurs achieve their goals. The mentors would be introduced to codification of new and proven innovative methodologies, stemming from shared sets of "best practices" ... This would occur through the joint creation of simple shareable tools (under Creative Commons licenses), administrable and auto-administrable, taking into account the realities of the creative ecosystem and the entrepreneurial capacities of young people.

These tools will be based on the combined observation and analysis of three distinct guidance methods, both formally and informally presented in transnational meetings¹ held by the project's partners:

- The first in May 2019 in the United States, at New York University / Tisch School of the Arts / Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music,
- A second in October 2019 in Stavanger in Norway, in the premises of Elefant, a guidance site for artists and creative activity,
- And a third in France, in Biarritz, in November 2021, thanks to the welcome of the Combustible association, which specializes in artistic guidance.

A team of thirteen youth mentors, from all three participating organizations, will be tasked with developing the competencies of individuals, structures, establishing networks with local partners and institutions, as well as lay the foundations for an international network of trust, for young people to exchange, and reinforce Europe's cultural innovation.

¹ The agenda recalled here shows the updated periods of the project taking into account the shifts caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. We come back hereafter on these major changes in relation to the initial schedule and their impacts on the course of the project, but especially on its expectations and outputs.



Based on this original framework, the project is structured around three areas of work proposed to the partners:

- **Area 1:** Identify and share the formal and non-formal tools of accompaniment of the different partners
- **Area 2:** Improve the understanding of the local, national and international environments of young artistic entrepreneurs
- **Area 3:** Identify and share assessment indicators of personal and professional development of young artistic entrepreneurs

In order to objectify the approach, these areas propose tracks of the envisaged trace tools:

- **For area 1**
 - Creation of summary sheets presenting the various formal and non-formal support tools used by the partners
 - Formalizing of new shared innovative methodologies
- **For area 2**
 - Creation of a positioning tool for young cultural and creative entrepreneurs
 - Creation of a mapping of the actors of the local, national and international ecosystems of cultural and creative entrepreneurship
- **For area 3**
 - Creation of a self-administered questionnaire for young cultural and creative entrepreneurs to identify their entrepreneurial strengths and weaknesses

The main thread of the project is, to work on the analysis of the singularities and cultural and economic specificities linked to each partner country.



2. Course of events

We summarize here the main contributions in the progressive implementation of the You&I project and its progressive refinement.

2.1. First meeting - May 2019 in the USA at New York University (NYU Tisch School of the Arts)

2.1.1. Setting the scene

The host, Clive Davis Institute, is a component of a higher education, private non-profit university, business institution.

The faculty members are recognized experts in both their artistic fields and in business success.

The young people we meet here are students, potential project leaders.

For the teachers, the question of entrepreneurship constitutes an essential and sought-after modality of professional integration at the end of the studies. The involvement of young people in their professional projects is a major dimension of their success.

They must learn to be creative, both in their artistic dimensions and in their approach to business.



2.1.2. Framing and contributions

After an initial round table presentation, for the representatives of NYU, Elefant and Combustible, of their respective structures, projects and expectations in the You&I project, the week of meetings was mainly organized around the visit of the main university departments involved in the program, the presentation of their pedagogical tools, exchanges around the approach of "recruitment", teaching, facilities, and support of students.

Participation in courses, informal exchanges and questioning by other members of the Consortium, made it possible to initiate the co-constructive process of the project around a reflection on the systems implemented by New York University, on a specific population, in the specific environment of North America.

Questions about transferable dimensions, the limits of a strictly comparative approach, the weight of economic and institutional contexts and environments began to emerge.

2.2. Second meeting - October 2019 in Stavanger, Norway around Elefant, a group of artists and creatives



2.2.1. Setting the scene

Elefant is an organization that brings together cultural and creative entrepreneurs. As a co-working space in its territorial environment, it provides these diverse professionals with logistical resources, but also with opportunities for joint project development. The economic autonomy of the associates is a key dimension of the system, which combines the contribution of the cooperators with external financing.

For Elefant, young people are potential entrepreneurs! The organization's associates are in permanent contact with educational institutions and cultural operators, and are involved in their programs and actions. The ability to act upon entrepreneurial initiatives is promoted as a possible way of contributing to the greater good of the organization.

The skills to be acquired and personal motivation are inseparable.



2.2.2. Framing and contributions

The week of meetings was mainly organized around visiting a multiplicity of operators (theaters, libraries, art centers, educational teams, researchers in cultural economics, resource centers, etc.) whose diversity particularly illuminated the search for a subtle balance between entrepreneurial dimensions and implications in the field of social interest.

The tools used here, and that can be put to use by young project leaders, are organized around networking. With a particular attention to the cooperative concept rather than competitive.

These meetings, the informal exchanges and questioning of the other members of the Consortium, have enabled us to refine our thoughts by integrating the dimensions of the mixed economy, which are very specific to the Norwegian framework of "social entrepreneurship", of openness to the world ...

As the questions and discoveries were made, a reflection has been developed on the problem of assessing and defining the accomplishments, development, and success of young people in cultural and creative projects, on the differentiated meaning of success in these areas, and on the place they can or must take in the principles of entrepreneurial education and support.

2.3. Mars 2020: France/USA - opportunity for an intermediate deepening

At the end of 2019, beginning of 2020, Carine Puyo, head of Combustible and coordinator of the You&I project, was actively preparing the third and final session scheduled - at the time - for June 2020 for a finalization of the program in October 2020. During preparatory exchanges with the NYU team, a window of opportunity opened for an in-depth work period during a residency in the United States, planned to take place between New York and Los Angeles over the period February-March 2020. What looked like a simple object of in-depth consultation will turn out to have far more significant impacts ...

2.4. March 2020: Covid 2019 (...) - temporal adjustments and project redesign

Carine Puyo spent two weeks at the Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music, where she was provided with an office and full access to all the facilities of the building. She attended several classes, faculty meetings, student project pitches, and internal showcases. She took a series of photographs of the facilities that the Institute still uses today and conducted a video interview with the Institute's Associate Chair Nick Sansano, introducing his organization. Unfortunately, the third week planned with the Institute's counterparts in Los Angeles was canceled due to the global health crisis that was developing, and Carine Puyo had to cut her stay short and return to France.

2.4.1. Deadline extensions and operational changes

Very quickly, it became clear that the time horizons of the project had to be adjusted. Regarding the successive phases of the pandemic, in the different countries involved, a series of exchanges took place with the European program's instructive services, You&I's interlocutors: we will mainly note the two time limits of:

- 13/10/2020: first update of the project - postponement of the deadline to 31.10.2021;
- 29/07/2021: second update of the project - duration, budget and work program.

The deadline of the project will thus be gradually moved from October 2020 to December 2021. In addition, due to changes in the geographical location of the activity of Combustible, the third and last meeting and the finalization activities of the project are refocused on Biarritz and the Basque Country.



2.4.2. Intermediate time and project redesign

Beyond this simple mechanism of postponement and related reorganization, the period March 2020 - November 2021 - a year and a half, almost the entire initial duration of the project! - was thus organized around remote work, exchanges and multiple operational collaborations that initiated substantial changes in the planned system:

- Time - in itself - is a key factor here: the members of the Consortium were thus able to amplify and deepen interactions, to get to know each other in action, which significantly modified the working relationships;
- The nature of the interactions has largely deviated: beyond the exchange of information, data and tools initially envisaged in the You&I system, the stakeholders have found themselves in a situation of co-production of the redeployment of the system: new constraints have thus generated new ideas;

The micro-collaboration proposed by NYU to Carine Puyo was thus generalized. And, progressively, the status of the members of the Consortium has evolved to become a project-team.

And, in so far as this time of unexpected distance and postponement made it possible to define the expectations of the program in much greater depth and detail than expected. The last meeting, organized by Combustible, the linchpin of You&I, also changed status. From a concluding meeting, it became the start of new, in-depth collaborations.

2.5. Third meeting - November 2021, in Biarritz, France, organized by Combustible, an agency specializing in artistic and cultural policy support.

2.5.1. Setting the scene

Combustible is a non-profit organization – French “association under the law of 1901” - skilled as a consulting agency in the development of artistic projects and in the construction of cultural policies.

The guiding belief of the association states, Young people are essential as project leaders. They can uniquely renew the cultural landscape and invent new, unexplored modalities and methods.

For Combustible, a support operator in a mixed economy, this renewal is a major challenge. Access to economic autonomy through the mastery of development tools is at the heart of the project's values. Co-construction and the search for synergies imply leaving behind visions that are too self-centered.



2.5.2. Framing and contributions

The week of meetings was largely fuelled by the work and exchanges resulting from the latency phase imposed on the project.

It was then mainly organized around a series of work sessions - formal and informal - involving the participants in the project with the objective of forwarding and developing the effort's overall concept, discussing the potential collaborative follow-ups, and planning operational logistics (timing, organization, finances ...).

It concluded with a day of meetings and debates with a group of actors, associations, institutions, public agencies, and financial supporters of young project leaders, with a broad focus on the field of current music, as well as support of cultural and creative initiatives.

This day was the occasion for the representatives of NYU, Elefant and Combustible to present their respective structures and projects, with a reflexive return in relation to the original expectations and intentions.

At the end of the process, this first public collaborative presentation raised multiple questions and points of interest from the participants, many of whom were positioned as evaluators of the relevance of the transnational grouping formed by You&I.

The question of the operational opportunities of such a dynamic was then opened to discussion and debate. Each of the participants had the opportunity, with regard to their personal positioning, to indicate the interest and proposed formats of how a reinforced project of transnational cooperation could work in synergy with their own objectives and stakes.



3. Chronological review and methodology in action

To deepen this necessarily cursory reading of the main stages of implementation, we now propose a second return, more focused on the axes of the project, and the way they were worked on, in a retroactive chronological vision.

In particular, we point out the points of clarification and adjustment of the initial project and the consequent repositioning of the stakeholders.

3.1. Main topics and work areas

The project was initially organized around the three work areas defined previously in this report.

- **Area 1:** Identify and share the formal and non-formal support tools of the different partners

- **Area 2:** Improve the understanding of the local, national and international environments of young artistic entrepreneurs
- **Area 3:** Identify and share indicators of personal and professional development of young artistic entrepreneurs

Their processing gradually became clearer as the real challenge of the project became apparent.

The first two - the methodological approach placed in a systemic analysis - were constantly at the heart of the work and exchanges. During the successive meetings, the background of each of the participating groups, in their own territory, with regard to their positioning vis-à-vis the young operators they support, were clarified, with strategic orientations that strongly emphasize moral and ethical values.

Understanding progressively deepened over the course of the meeting. Mutual observation, in situ, of their individual approaches, methodologies and styles of engagement allowed the stakeholders to measure the potential added value of a more global approach.

The third area- which in fact poses the positioning of the participants with respect to the young people they work with - quickly proved to be central, but was quickly reversed.

Thus, the question of knowledge, identification and evaluation of young people entering the Consortium, whether by questionnaire or interview, was shifted to focus on the problem of the needs of these groups and the adequacy of the means and methods implemented by the members of the Consortium.

As we became more aware of each member's differences, in regard to the ways of supporting either students in New York, young entrepreneurs in Norway, or holders of mixed economy projects in France, the idea of sharing methodologies become an obvious conclusion. A system that would make it possible to cross-reference these approaches, share resources, and create synergies for the project holders quickly became a glaringly apparent path to establishing a codification of our "best practices".

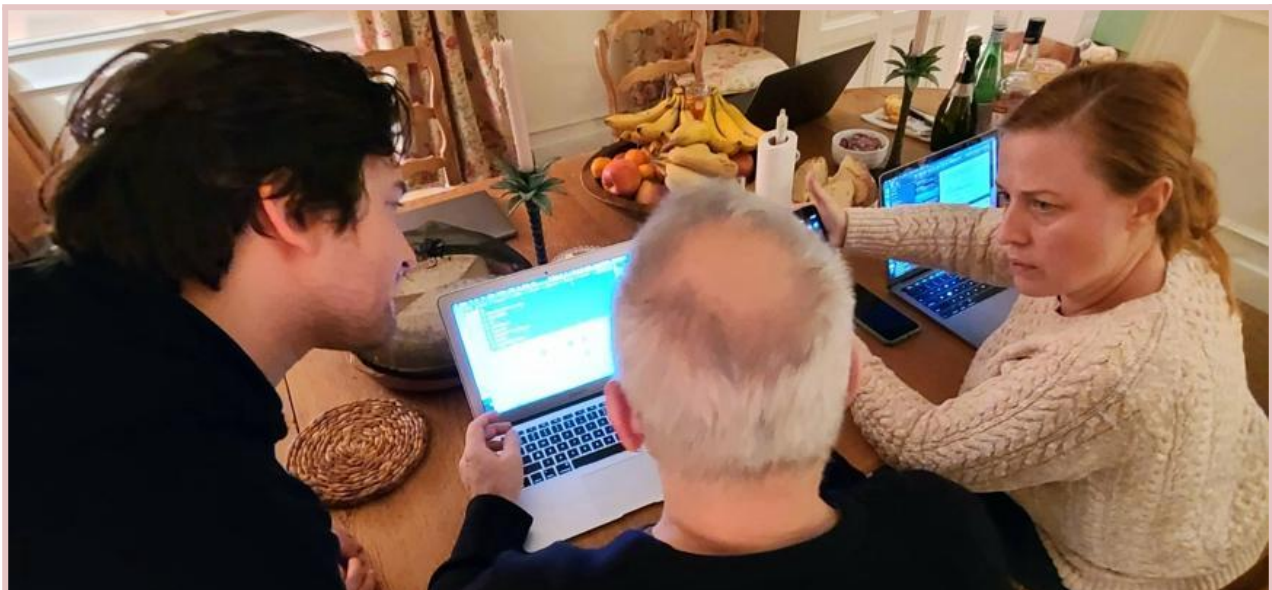


3.2. Key moments: the objectives of the project are clarified and redefined

The long period of time imposed on the project by the pandemic was particularly valuable in allowing the initial orientations to be reflected upon, and developed further.

During remote work sessions, reflections on how best to mobilize resources identified during the meetings, reflections on collaborations, and project engineering (see EMA below, for example), the stakeholders tested the project's structuring axes, but with much more operational objectives.

These discoveries and revelations forwarded and better focused the very nature of the You&I project significantly. The groups readily accepted the changes that revealed themselves. A more unified and concerted effort began to take shape!



3.3. An empowerment project for partner operators ... supported by trace tools (...)

Originally, the project aimed to meet and get to know partners who were far apart, both geographically and in terms of their core business, profiles and economic models. A desire to find ways to compromise and unify became more of an acceptance of our differences, and an acknowledgement that we can all benefit from sharing these differences. Mutual trust and respect allowed for a welcomed attitude of "we all have something to learn from each other". Potential confrontation turned into growth via a strengthened alliance.

The immediate priorities then shifted to finding ways to trace and better codify our differences and singularities, in order to perhaps highlight points of convergence, and identify transferable and tangible "best practices".

3.4. (...) which leads to the mission statement of an operational team at the service of young people with the agenda of creating an operational system with adequate tools

In practice, You&I allowed the sharing of ideas around the key question: "how to accompany, equip, and support young people involved in cultural and creative fields... and how to mobilize a transnational approach to doing this?"

The stakeholders have identified a common set of values, a synergetic vision of the contribution of “nomadism” in the fermentation of a cultural project, and have identified, in their respective know-how and networks of practices, resources that are perfectly adapted to the evolving expectations of their audiences.

Whether it is the students of NYU, very strongly oriented towards entrepreneurial thinking within domestic markets but wanting to expand into a more global, transnational mode of thinking;
 Or the young entrepreneurs of Elefant, for whom the trans-European, or even global, horizon is rapidly proving to be a necessary stretch to economically and symbolically move beyond their territory;
 Or the case for the project leaders and young people supported by Combustible, for whom the French mixed economy quickly proves to be too small a cocoon, and who have everything to learn from confronting different cultures and ways of doing things. The guided shift to multinational, global thinking and practice is a benefit to all.

The discovery of the synergistic potential of the members of the Consortium that were built during the project, on the basis of the project’s areas of focus and series of meeting, and the common needs of its clientele s, have allowed us to identify operational potential well beyond the group’s initial ambitions.





4. Conclusion: a pilot scheme for the internationalization of cultural and creative initiatives in our three countries

4.1. Reflective feedback on relevance and methods of operation

We would like to emphasize the relevance and success of the system proposed by Europe, which we have tried to follow to the best of our ability. The opportunity afforded the group, time to meet, to exchange, to debate, allowed in the end, a much more effective and complete experience.

4.2. From a logic of reflection to a logic of action: redeployments

The project was in fact based on the principle of observation, pooling, and cross-reflection, aiming at least to enlighten each of the actors on other ways of doing things, in other approaches to guiding and mentoring young people, in other environments, with other constraints and economic levers.

This dynamic, once the long period of time has allowed for the amplification of micro-collaborations and situational testing, ultimately translates into the possibility of an operational proposal.

4.3. Emerging transnational support

4.3.1. Base

What emerges primarily, from the You&I project, is the evidence that global, transnational exchanges and training are of utmost importance to the young people they guide and mentor. The need for transnational synergies, alliances, and entrepreneurship training has been empirically proven.

4.3.2. Methodology

What follows is a methodological principle of implementing transnational pathways mentored by networks of recognized experts, who know each other and are co-opted in order to provide the public with an in-situ resource, and resituated in relation to its needs and the progress of its project.

4.3.3. Operational

Two instruments are necessary:

1. a transnational network of operators;
2. a tool for follow-up and real-time interaction between these operators and the young person being supported, whether in an academic setting, a data exchange setting, or a business setting.

4.3.4. The young person at the heart of the project

For what appears to be the driving force of the system is not the knowledge, tools and devices but the energy provided by the young person's cultural and creative ambitions and projects. It is then necessary to be able to adjust in real time the resources and adapted means of support to best serve the young person's personal achievement objectives.

4.4. Emergence of a transnational scheme for young creative entrepreneurs

Objectives: project realization / business creation / development of transnational initiatives and informational data exchanges.



4.4.1. A contract of trust: co-opting involved operators

The You&I project team notes a broad convergence of values and principles around the objective of supporting the cultural and creative projects of young entrepreneurs. The basis of the relationship between the young person and the mentors will be based on a commonly adopted system of values and benevolence.

The core group of actors is already able to mobilize a wider network of current and active professionals, depending on need.

It is therefore necessary to organize the identification -and the training of these new adjunct mentors on the basis of the work carried out, the tools identified, and above all shared common values.

4.4.2. An international steering committee / a project curation tool shared in real time

The principle of the project being to structure, organize, and accompany transnational paths of young entrepreneurs as they act upon their cultural and creative initiatives. It is now a question of structuring this greater network of operators, at least in three dimensions:

- On the governance of the system (principle of entry/exit of the public, identification/cooperation of mentors) and its permanent evaluation: a permanent steering committee;
- On the implementation of tools for real-time monitoring of the "Road-book assignments" of project leaders (travel, contacts, expertise to be mobilized, mentoring of the project and updating of objectives and approaches ...);
- On the question of public access to this system and the logistics of support and territorial selection.

4.4.3. Multiple resource tracks to compose/recompose around the projects

The simple exchanges and pre-projects carried out during the implementation of You&I has already allowed us to envision diversified financial and logistical resources, combining public financing, private support through foundations and non-governmental organizations, private partnerships, and exchanges that can constitute a very solid basis for the construction and management of a project for which it will be necessary to:

- To Provide young people with a minimal base of necessary start-up financing;
- While creating the capacity to complete funding, upon a positive evaluation of progress, and the proven legitimacy of new needs.



4.4.4. Advanced pre-planning on adjacent projects

During You&I, new projects and devices have already been built that will have their own existence, but that are already in line with the larger and more ambitious project that we are planning.

- Combustible is thus waiting for an accreditation on a European "mobilities" device, co-piloted with a local network of actors, which can constitute a territorial base (the South-West of France) and thematic (current music) but easily deployable;
- Elefant and Combustible are carrying out the E.M.A. project, which aims to expand their European partnerships (Italy, Poland, Spain, etc.), to build nomadic artistic residences.

It should also be noted that NYU has campuses in Berlin, Paris, Madrid, Prague, and Dublin that can constitute in many ways a logistical rear base to be mobilized ... Berlin's campus is the European home base of the Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music, our direct NYU partner.

4.4.5. Meta-productions: an engineering of engineering

This You&I experience therefore concludes with realization of very exciting immediate potential, and a deepening of cooperational perspectives. The experience has allowed us to extract information more than sufficient to propose a methodological and pedagogical framework for the constitution of third-party systems that could be envisioned by other actors, in other territories.



Please visit our website to access the documentation and deliverables related to the project

www.youandproject.org