DANCING MUSEUMS

Dancing Museums

THE DEMOCRACY OF BEINGS

EVALUATION
REPORT
2018—2021

Contents

Introduction

Dancing Museums (DM2)[1] was designed to develop long-term collaboration between dance organisations, museums, and the local community. This research concerns the overall evaluation of DM2. It focuses on the **processes** DM2 has stimulated, and the **impact** these processes have had on those involved.

The evaluation focuses on how interdisciplinary collaboration between dance artists, dance organisations and museums has influenced organisational attitudes, behaviours, and relationships with audiences, while also nourishing artists' research and ways of working.

The research is centred around four project milestones, investigating if, and how, DM2 has generated the following:

1. impact on DM2 museums and dance organisations

/ broadening the contributions that museum, dance and heritage can make in their **local environment [Re-positioning]**

/ stimulating **organisation-wide commitment** and change in mindset towards developing successful **approaches to audience engagement [Organisational change and development]**

/ generating **personal** and **professional empowerment [Museums and dance organisation staff]**

/ equipping contributors with **cross-disciplinary skills** and **competencies and resilience [Museums and dance organisation staff]**

[1] DM2 took place between 2018-2021. A first edition of Dancing Museums was co-funded by the EU from 2015 to 2017.

2. *impact on DM2 artist*

/ influencing artists' creative processes and **acquisition of new skills**, **knowledge** and **competencies**

3. *impact on the audiences*

/ generating new ways of **experiencing art, heritage and cities**

/ enabling audiences to **derive meaning from artistic work**

/ building effective, positive and proactive relationships among artists, museums and local communities - verifying how art can be a catalyst for **social inclusion** and **change** and contributing to the **quality of people's lives** and their **cultural and social wellbeing**

4. *impact on the cultural sector and the research community*

/ providing successful **approaches** and scalable and repeatable **methods** for **audience development and engagement**.

This report was carried out by the research team between 2019 and 2021, adopting the **Theory of Change methodology**. From an initial description of the main research strategies used (participatory action research, qualitative approach, case study analysis), the report presents the research results following the chronological order of the research phases. The main evaluation outputs are the **7 local teams value chain analysis**, alongside **recommendations to support future developments**.

The structure of the project at a glance

In DM2, individuals and arts organisations share, develop and transfer the skills and knowledge needed to broaden and deepen connections and relationships with audiences.

The practice-led research group, composed of artists, dance organisations, museums and universities from seven countries, looks at how **the presence of dance can offer new ways of experiencing art and heritage** and help audiences and visitors engage both intellectually and viscerally with artworks.

The learning happens both **locally** and **internationally**.

LOCALLY, dance artists engaged in a series of **long-term residencies** (a 10-week residency), which put the human body at the centre of practices aimed at involving the community. In collaboration with museums and dance organisations, they developed and applied **new approaches to engage people with art**.

The residency has been developed on-site at museums and on-line, during the pandemic. Overall, there have been **6 artists in residence in 6 European cities**: Nottingham; Bassano del Grappa/ Borgo Valsugana; Vitry-sur-Seine; Rotterdam; Barcelona; Prague. The 10 weeks are split into 5 residencies of two weeks each.

INTERNATIONALLY
Locally derived experiences and the knowledge gained therein has been shared with project colleagues through **2 international seminars** (originally there were 3, but one was cancelled due to covid) and **6 workshops** where best practice has been explored and presented. These gatherings gave the opportunity to all the project participants to come together (in presence or online) to discuss and share the developments happening at the local level.

The following table outlines the phases of the project.

What	*Where*	*When*	*How*
Kick-off Partners' meeting	France, Vitry-sur-Seine	14—15 October 2018	live
SEMINAR 1 - Why place dance in a museum/gallery?	UK, Nottingham	11—14 May 2019	live
WORKSHOP 1 - Participation	Italy, Venezia/Borgo Valsugana/Bassano del Grappa	19—23 August 2019	live
WORKSHOP 2 - How can the arts work towards inclusion?	France, Vitry-sur-Seine	28 Nov. — 1 Dec. 2019	live
SEMINAR 2 - Seeing with the eyes of the body	Germany, Bonn	25—27 March 2020	cancelled
WORKSHOP 3 - How Can We Embody the Artwork and the Art Space, and How Does It Change Our Perception? How to be together when we can't be together?	Czech Republic, Prague	15—17 June 2020	digital
WORKSHOP 4 - Art is for whom? Buildings represent what?	Spain, Barcelona	2—6 November 2020	digital
WORKSHOP 5 - Acts of social and political change: new voices	UK, Nottingham	8—12 March 2021	digital
WORKSHOP 6 + SEMINAR 3 - Curation as teamwork. Practicing collaboration, in/exclusion and change.	Netherlands, Rotterdam	28 June — 2 July 2021	digital
Final Conference + Evaluation meeting	Italy, Bassano del Grappa/Borgo Valsugana	7—9 October 2021	hybrid

Executive summary

DM2 involved 3 categories of contributors:

1) dance artists
2) museums, art galleries and art centres
3) dance organisations.

Including the research partners, a total of **17 organisations/institutions**, **6 dance artists**, **1 mentor** and **2 facilitators/advisors** were involved. Spread across **7 different countries** (FR, DE, ES, UK, IT, NE, CZ), **40 contributors** were actively engaged however at times, up to **70 people were involved**.

The evaluation process identified a number of complexities, to be acknowledged but not necessarily resolved by the project:

1. The **composition of the consortium**, which is varied in terms of vocation, and the financial and cultural scale of individual organisations. The geographical distribution and the local context of each partner played an important role as did the level of formal engagement with the partnership (partners or associates).

Having been, or not been, part of DM1[2] or having a pre-existent relationship with some of the partners has also played a role.

2. While working within the same overarching project frame, contributors in a European cooperation project have **different needs and expectations**, and identified the cooperation process as serving **different objectives** in terms of self-positioning, visibility, financial benefit, opportunities for experimentation.

3. As a result of points one and two above, this project was dependent upon building a **trusting and coherent relationship based on clarity**. This proved to be complex with so many contributors involved.

An aspiration of DM2 was to build an EU cooperative space - where artistic reflections and experimentation can arise and develop across cities and communities. A key finding of this evaluation process was that this requires the cultural players to build a **common ground based on trust, clarity and acceptance of risk-taking**. This is a journey that requires time and effort.

[2] *Dancing Museums — Old Masters, New Traces* (2015-2017) brought together 5 dance organisations and 8 museums from 5 countries to explore new ways to engage with audiences and to highlight the role dance/live performance can play in enhancing our understanding of and engagement in art.
The project put the relationship with audiences at the centre of the exploration. It triggered the creative involvement of a diverse, intergenerational public (children, students, adults, senior citizens, people with disabilities and from underrepresented groups, researchers, as well as staff from the museums and dance spaces).

Covid-19 impacted the delivery of DM2. From March 2020, social distancing restricted physical interaction and mobility, interrupting artists' residencies in museums. **Digital experimentation** replaced much of the intended interactions, making it possible to progress the project goals. This physical distancing has influenced project development.

Given the situation imposed by the pandemic, the consortium felt the need to intensify **moments of exchange and dialogue**. These virtual encounters were animated by a genuine **spirit of solidarity** and have been made use to identify alternative ways to give continuity to the project activities, and to encourage the sharing of practical solutions. This helped contributors navigate the contextual complexity, including the economic responses some organisations had to implement.

This constant dialogue created a space to share emotional states, professional and human discomfort and to identify professional and human support mechanisms. This made it possible to establish **trust within the group**, in varying degrees and with different intensities. It must be acknowledged that this dimension of renewed trust was enabled by a process of mutual understanding developed since the early stages of DM2 and nurtured incrementally during the face-to-face workshops and seminars that were possible before Covid-19.

The impossibility of physical contact with audiences led to more focus on the dynamics that the presence of a dance artist can bring within an organisation, rather than on audience engagement.

As DM2 progressed, the dance sector was reflecting upon its role in society. The dance artists questioned their language and modes of communication with audiences, and their own ability to interpret the ever-growing complex reality we are living through. This was also evident among the heritage sector partners involved in DM2. Museums and galleries were questioning their meaning in terms of representation. Museums and galleries are not neutral spaces; while these organisations can be seen as expressions of monolithic cultural forms, they can also be sites for new forms of cultural creation and interventions.

These reflections took on new significance in the light of the pandemic. The consortium had a proactive attitude in articulating art's power to activate a space for intimacy and inspiration, but also as a location for the expression of civic power. This proceeds from the belief that **art should not only be understood as an act of creating, producing, and exhibiting material objects and/or digital experiences, but also as the way in which an individual approaches, organises and structures their life**.

Some **key questions arose with renewed intensity**:

/ What is the *role of art* at a time of social transformation?

/ *Why* do we *make art, who is it for,* and does it make sense to continue using the same formats and materials?

/ What should art focus on and *what difference <u>can</u> it make*?

/ *How far can artists go in social transformation without renouncing their role as creators and curators?*

/ Can the art world *provoke and drive social transformation,* a *shift in values*, or a broad rethinking of our relationship to material culture?

The current situation - Covid-19 and other social justice issues that rose to the surface during 2020, led artists and cultural sector colleagues to question, **rethink, and reimagine the way art institutions, art practices, and artists operate, for whom and with whom**.

DM2 became a space of co-imagination. New **organisational models** and **artistic interventions** were tested, and this report aims to:

1. summarise the **main evidence** reached through the research path
2. make a series of **recommendations** intended to be helpful to anyone considering a project like this in the future
3. outline the main **research strategy**
4. explore the **impact by type or theme** (e.g. museum, dance, artist)
5. explore the **impact in cross-disciplinary groups** based upon their geographical location.

The methodological approach based both on qualitative data gathering and case study research that was specific to geographical location enabled researchers to triangulate their findings and provide participants with a new level of meaning for their activities.

The main evidence at a glance

A project like DM2 can be a catalyst for opening up new areas of activity and providing new forms of interpretation. DM2 could be viewed as a flexible tool-kit - adapted across a range of subject matter - placing the dance artists at the centre as an agent for reinterpretation. DM2 enabled solutions that were transformative, innovative and inclusive.

Transformation

A level of transformation can be detected in the **relational dynamics and exchange between contributors** during the international meetings, workshops, and seminars. On these occasions, it was possible to compare different approaches and implementation methods and it brought the discussion and reflection to a **"trans-local" level**[3]. Partly due to Covid-19, the local, geographical context became central to the motivation of each team. This led to the creation of a framework of dynamic interconnection and equal exchange that took into account local demands on an equal footing with the European and global context.

[3] The notion of trans-local has been developed in different European contexts and it has been theorised by Giuliana Ciancio: "the meaning of trans-local has meant to instal cooperative efforts among localities which were connected by value-driven choices, consciously or unconsciously, in favour of the Harvey notion of 'better life'".

Innovation

One of the most innovative aspects of DM2 was the **exchange and professional growth** that occurred, despite boundaries imposed by the pandemic. Challenges were **transformed into opportunities and barriers prompted leaps of creative possibility**. DM2 became an arena to experience a new way of doing things in terms of engaging communities and a broader range of participants.

Museums and dance organisations have developed new ways of working during DM2.

Some local teams **co-imagined creative spaces** through multi-disciplinary collaboration. **This involved moving away from traditional, monolithic interpretations of culture**. It was possible for some local teams to **move beyond their usual 'comfort zone'**.

Heterogeneous cultural values, practices and understanding were at the heart of local team decision-making. DM2 was a sort of *bildungsroman*, a **space for learning and co-imagining future spaces to act, experiment and investigate ways of experiencing art**.

Inclusion

A main goal of DM2 was to promote **audience development and engagement**, to experiment with forms of co-creation, and to foster social inclusion.

The work done in local teams promoted **greater awareness of the various approaches audiences have to access artworks**, and the need for museums to offer a variety of experiences to meet those needs, particularly as those experiences and needs are radically changing.

Dance Artists - alongside other artists and performers - started to blend live and remote activities, socialising in digital spaces. Consideration of this, alongside the uncertainty around what audiences will find interesting in the future, indicates that a **major opportunity to demonstrate alternative models of engagement could be drawn from DM2**.

Change at many levels

Involvement in DM2 impacted upon **ways of working, methodologies and approaches** at a local, organisational and individual level.

Local level

At the local level, experimental work practices were enabled by the involvement of an artist, and the collaboration and regular negotiation between cultural organisations. Positive effects reported by local team members included an increased attention to **team building**, **staff empowerment** and **shared decision-making**.

Organisational level

DM2 questioned the role of **museums** and museum collections, paving the way for a **conception of a museum as a living ecosystem**. What we mean by this is that the whole museum staff, the visitors and the material culture and history represented by the museum interact with other cultural and non-cultural organisations in the service of their community and for a social purpose.

At an organisational level in DM2, the ambition can be articulated around:

/ horizontal leadership

/ ways of working that empower people to embrace a **process-based vision**

/ use of *ad hoc* **evaluation tools** to interpret inputs and outcomes and the interaction of these with a complex system (e.g. a stable cultural organisation) over a longer period of time.

DM2 required organisations' allocating time, energy and resources to different types of activity and practice. For example, several groups reported a shift from a linear way of working (from idea to solution) towards a **working in intermediate steps**, during which the process is constantly shared, questioned, and renegotiated. By focusing on medium-term goals, the team was stimulated and felt engaged. The values, opinions and ideas of the whole staff contributed to the ideas and impressions developed by the **dance artists**.

Individual level

The challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic stimulated participants - from all areas of DM2 - to work constantly on their interpersonal and **soft skills**[4].

For dance artists, the opportunity to reflect on the sense of belonging to an organisation, the power dynamics within it and the limitations and opportunities of the organisational structure and culture became part of the project.

It was often the dance artist who **proposed alternative interpretations** to those made by the museum regarding the collection and ways of engaging the public. This prompted the group to reflect on topics, opportunities or risks that had never been considered before. On occasion, this was met with **resistance from the museum staff** - manifesting itself as indifference or an urge to take control of the project.

[4] Soft skills are personal attributes and interpersonal skills that affect the way of working and the way of interacting with people in the work environment. Soft skills are highly valued in the modern workplace because they can ensure a productive, collaborative and healthy work environment in an increasingly competitive and uncertain world. According to UNESCO, the Soft Skills (also known as Non-Cognitive Skills) are" patterns of thought, feelings and behaviours" (Borghans et al., 2008) that are socially determined and can be developed throughout the lifetime to produce value. Soft Skills can comprise personality traits, motivations and attitudes and are vitally important for the employability and adaptability of European citizens.

[5] See Bassano del Grappa and Borgo Valsugana based-team.

The dance artist provoked museums and dance organisations to reflect on **dance as a human right and as a form of human expression**[5]. International workshops played a central role in this through addressing strong and disruptive themes such as colonialism. These themes became part of the artistic research process and were integrated into the museums' journey.

It took time to **legitimise the presence, the role, and the value of the dance artist** in the museum. Staff had to accept the dance artist as part of the team, listening to their needs while appreciating the idea of dance as an artistic discipline able to bring value to the work of the museum. In some cases, this led to the re-organisation of museum spaces and museum visit routes or in defining different ways to experience the museums space and its collection in a playful way (e.g. the treasure hunts developed in Rotterdam).

Many of the skills acquired were the result of museum staff departing from their usual roles to contribute to the project. DM2 did not require the museum or art centre to act as the commissioning body of a final performance piece. This meant that **power relations and actions were questioned at all levels of the museum**: from senior management to curatorial and educational teams. Museum staff turned attention away from concrete output in favour of paying attention to the process.

Although the contribution of the dance organisations in leading this process may not have seemed immediately visible, they were fundamental. In most cases they opted to **facilitate instead directing the activity**; they played an under-the-radar but **constant** role in **stimulating museums** to create a positive and supportive environment for the artistic research process.

Each dance organisation **adapted its role for its specific context**. However, two common objectives can be recognised in the role of the dance organisations: to enable collaboration within the local team and to support the artist research process without being invasive or output driven.

The Bonn case study (in which the art centre was not associated with a dance organisation) evidenced how crucial it was to be able to host a dance artist beyond a commissioning relationship. DM2 Dance organisations based in other countries enabled the Bundeskunsthalle to host their associated dance artists.

For many of the contributors, **communication skills and emotional intelligence were stimulated** when trying to understand and manage their own and other's perspectives and emotions. Much effort went into setting up a **solid**

and collaborative communication system to promote the project and create an environment of institutional trust both inside the organisation and in the local context.

Some local teams invited participation from professionals working in their locality but not officially part of DM2 (this occurred frequently and may have been the result of pandemic-related restrictions). Strategic partnerships were not limited to the cultural sector (e.g. the Prague team established a connection with tourism). This was motivated by a desire to set up a long-term relationship beyond the end of the project. **Building synergies with local artists, institutions and organisations contributed to the growth of personal and professional networks.**

Negotiation and conflict resolution between organisations and within local teams was part of the daily routine. Artists prompted museum colleagues to **think critically and creatively when** faced with unusual ideas outside their comfort zone. The pandemic shed light on people's ability to be **flexible**, and on an organisations' ability to constantly adapt. **Organisational skills, partnership building, creative thinking, and digital engagement** were among the competencies gained.

The pandemic forced local teams and artists to programme activities and project outputs online, experimenting with the development of tailor-made digital formats (audio-walks, online exhibitions, video recordings, e-books). These aimed to reach an audience unable to experience the performance in person, and to disseminate both the outputs of the artistic research and of the project as a whole.

DM2 was an arena of **open and porous experimentation**. It meant different things to different local teams, resulting in different dynamics in specific local contexts. However, in all instances, it was perceived as a **driver for change** - at institutional, individual or behavioural levels - and had several key ambitions:

1) **advocating for dance** as an **embodied form of heritage**

2) redefining the **concept of the museum as something relevant in, and for, society**

Academic concepts from the fields of dance and performance studies, curatorial and visual arts studies and museology were introduced and questioned during DM2. Case studies have been presented at international conferences, enriching this emerging knowledge with international academic knowledge. The publication *Moving Spaces - Enacting Dance, Performance, and the Digital in the Museum* (Franco S., Giannachi G., 2021) animated the debate among interdisciplinary academics who are currently attempting to theorise the civic role of the museum in relation to dance practices.

The **role a museum can play in society** - now and in the future - was constantly interrogated in DM2. Current debates on decolonisation, the relationship of the visitor/spectator with the artwork, the digital dimension of exhibitions and the documentation of dance and performance for preservation purposes informed elements of DM2. A critical outcome for the project was the way in which dance artists were able to offer new perspectives in engagement with these issues.

Recommendations

Reading guide

Evaluation of DM2 has focused on validating the empirical learning identified by the researchers, whose goal has been to share it with a wider audience. This reading guide is our attempt to do that - in an immediate and tangible way. The result is a series of **recommendations, tips** and **'how to' guidelines**, to benefit those involved in the project and those who wish to take inspiration from DM2 for their own future work.

The research team focused on outcomes generated by the project to identify:

/ *enabling conditions*,
   both structural and attitudinal,

/ *value maps*,

/ *attitudes*[6],

/ *knowledge*[7]

/ *skills*[8]

Creating a tool-kit and competencies has been informed by the creative practices introduced by the dance artists, and takes into account the cultural differences that exist across the project. The nature and structure of DM2 renders it hard to replicate and therefore we have purposefully avoided creating a blueprint or suggesting a rigid formula. Instead, **we have connected multiple and heterogeneous experiences to create a set of informal tools and approaches that are replicable according to context**.

Some of the following elements function both as **pre-conditions** (they brought a relevant contribution to the effective project implementation where they were present from the very beginning), and as potential **outcomes**.

By focusing on these dimensions, the research team stimulated a self-assessment process in each local team.

[6] The attitudes are the disposition and mind-sets to act/ react to ideas, persons or situations; in the European Framework of Key Competencies also including values, thoughts and beliefs.

[7] Knowledge comprehends facts and figures, concepts, ideas and theories which are already established, supporting the understanding of a certain area or subject.

[8] Skills are the ability and capacity to carry out processes and use the existing knowledge to achieve results.

1. Creating a safe space

Informal tools & approaches

Creating a cooperative space - where artistic reflections and experimentation can arise and develop in cities and communities across Europe - requires the cultural players to establish a common ground which is also a **safe space** - to act and share **values, attitudes and ambitions**.
In DM2, a safe space was inhabited by peers coexisting in accordance with values and practices they shared, and where voices were all heard.

A safe space facilitates the transferral of local issues into a broader and complex geo-political space by sharing aims, ethics, economies and practices.

Safe space has controversial implications in the field of innovation. However, the creation of a "**project and consortium space" based on trust, mutual understanding and support** allowed participants to step outside their, or their organisation's, comfort zone, daring and experimenting. This required going into the uncertain territory of artistic experimentation, which is by its nature "unsafe"or beyond ordinary control.

This dimension of uncertainty and 'unsafety' became a common ground not only for the artists, but also for the dance organisations (often used to having a tangible research process) and the museums (they opened their modus operandi to totally different expressive languages).

1. Creating a safe space

Tips

The ground needs to be prepared through the creation of **trust and clarity,** where a cultural collaborative approach is enabled and legitimised, adopting an **active listening attitude, a constant dialogue and openness** to dealing with uncertainty and acceptance of the possibility of failure.

Take shared responsibility for risk taking - **in the spirit** of non-hierarchical project development.

A safe space does not avoid conflict, but it is where knowledge and emotions can clash and result in moving the project along in a positive way.
A safe space creates the possibility for different opinions to co-exist. A **point of friction** can be observed in the tension between:
1. individual and professional interests - trust is built on affinities (personal sphere) and on interests (professional sphere);
2. the implicit dialogue between an artwork or material object and the presence of a dance artist;
3. the implementation of cooperative logic (across different contributors) and organisational priorities.

A 'safe space' can arise when contributors have learnt to **co-exist** and to **respect divergent point of views,** have experienced conflict and can grow together.

Time and **care** are two fundamental conditions to enable the creation of the safe space mentioned above, as well as:

/ embrace an open attitude
/ stimulate the development of lateral and critical thinking
/ strengthen the risk attitude
/ feel legitimised
/ initiate necessary negotiation and mediation spaces
/ strengthen resilience.

2. Time and care

Tips

Taking care fosters an understanding of one another's' values, approaches and needs. This is essential to enable spaces where proactive and collaborative actions occur.

Taking time refers to the long-term aspect of the project as well as enabling time to stay together. Time needs to be allocated for formal meetings and informal get-togethers, to address specific issues and daily operational matters.

Spending time together facilitates the cultivation of a *shared language* - essential to arrive at a common vision and agreement about the best way forward.

3. Willingness and engagement

Willingness and **engagement** were essential for both project development and working effectively. Strategic and specific actions are required to implement the project successfully. The right action at the right moment can enhance or renew participants' engagement.

Tips

Be aware that different organisations can have different levels of engagement and willingness.

Be respectful if different partners take longer to achieve the same objectives.

Be supportive and inclusive in times of crisis.

Meet regularly, share short or medium-term goals.

Agree on an effective and inclusive communication system.

Openness to change is both an enabling condition and an outcome. It enables contributors to face the unexpected and become more resilient.
Openness to change is essential for a transformative journey.

4. Openness to change

Being open to change means embracing many things: the unknown, experimentation, the balance between the usual and unusual, cross-fertilisation, learning and transformation.

Tips

Replace the traditional output-oriented approach with a process-led approach.

See possibilities rather than limits.

Practice active listening.

Ask questions to prompt a change in perspective or risk-taking.

The following matrix is a **self-assessment matrix for organisations to use before embarking on a project**. Contributors are encouraged to decide which quadrant they would place their organisation in - taking the level of openness to change they aspire to or that feels appropriate for them at that moment in time. These positions should be identified with honesty, self-awareness, and without bias.

4. Openness to change

EXPERIMENTATION

CONTROL
TOP DOWN APPROACH

FREEDOM
BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

Control driven experimentation

Opennes to explore different fields, but in accordance with the internal, traditional way of working

Fertile ground for cross innovation

Opennes to explore different fields and the freedom to imagine doing things differently and learn new ways of working

Risk averse

*Resistant to change.
Working the way they always have*

Internal innovation

Willing to evolve and change but strictly within their own field of expertise

PLAYING SAFE

Picture 15
Self-assessment tool

DM2 proposed a structured framework free enough to enable varying levels of compliance across the strategic choices of the organisations.

Process-led projects require high levels of experimentation, cross-fertilisation, and cooperation. Project activities need to be legitimised across the whole organisation, and this is supported by a shared accountability. This eased when the project was **endorsed by senior management**.

If these conditions are not in place, the transformative potential of the project will be at risk.

Being mindful of limitations, friction and internal resistance is critical. It is essential that the **dance artist's work is legitimised** and that the artist is seen more as a staff member than as a 'visitor'. This will ensure that:

/ the resulting processes relate to institutional projects and activities

/ additional resources can be allocated to strengthen the project activities

/ shared objectives and responsibilities can be outlined.

5. Legitimacy

Tips

Experimentation needs to be legitimised and recognised by the whole staff.

Focus on the process by enabling an inclusive and receptive interrelation of competencies and perspectives.

Enable opportunities for questioning and suggestions for improvement, rather than hurrying to arrive at an expected output.

Facilitate the staff's complete knowledge of the project by sharing an approach based on the artistic research process.

Encourage the artist's freedom of action and movement in a manner that is responsive to the proposals being made and that facilitates the creation of a shared process on a timescale that works for all contributors involved.

Provide collaborators (e.g. dance artists) with visible indications that they are working with you in an official capacity (e.g a visitor or temporary staff pass, access to staff rooms, an email account, access to documentation, etc.). Leave plenty time to plan these elements as security checks or disclosures may be required.

6. A tension between the educational and the artistic dimension

To successfully engage the entire organisation, endorsement by the top management is essential but not sufficient. **Agreed roles and actions between various departments** of a museum are required, particularly between the curatorial and the educational teams. Creating and enabling **spaces for equal exchange and connection** can support this.

Museums are often structured into departments with clearly defined roles. This can sometimes lead to tension between departments who may have different views about how best to deliver the organisation's mission. A silo mentality could reduce the potential transformative benefits that a dance artist could bring into the organisation.

For example, if the dance artist interacts only with the educational department and has no involvement with curatorial work, this will limit the project's overall impact on ways of working.

The dance artist can act as a catalyst or as a change maker, facilitating new relational dynamics between departments. The **people centred approach** promoted by the dance artist enabled museum staff to enhance their engagement within the organisation.

Tips

Encourage dialogue and confrontation.

Ensure that all staff feel informed and involved in project activities.

Encourage and nurture a space that enables discussion without judgement.

Value people and the practical and cognitive contribution they can make.

7. Harmonising time and providing continuity

Hosting a dance artist on a continuous basis creates the need to **be flexible, particularly with time management**. This can conflict with the scheduling of daily activities in a museum environment.

Creative processes require long periods of time, often characterised by **discontinuity: moments of extreme concentration** alternate with **time spent apart or in deep research mode**.

MOMENTS OF EXTREME CONCENTRATION
The residency periods of DM2 required planning and availability on the part of the host (also in terms of giving spaces of autonomy and freedom within the context of the museum).

TIME SPENT APART
Moments of contemplation where a time for assimilation and adaptation to change is needed, although in some cases this can result in a sensation of disorientation.

Tips

Keep the conversation alive even during the moments of "time spent apart".

Set up a flexible timetable, clarifying the main steps of the project's development, including "time spent apart".

Set an effective communication system (see below).

Be patient, trust the artist and try to be open to the unexpected, avoiding the desire to control everything.

Be confident in the fact that the process matters more than the output.

The research strategy

Participatory action research

Gathering data & research phases

Gathering Data

We have taken a **qualitative approach to data collection**, considering the immediate and longer-term development of the project:

/ creative and organisational processes
/ professional and personal relationships
/ artistic and methodological insights
/ trans-disciplinary achievements
/ knowledge transfer
/ expected and unexpected outcomes

To achieve this, the original design of the research followed the project implementation schedule, ensuring that each planned milestone was reached (residency, seminar, workshop). Researchers also tracked the way individual contributors developed as the project evolved.

The original design of the research was based on:

1) Considering **the main clusters of contributors** involved in the project (mentors, facilitators, dance organisations, museums and artists).

2) Providing a **rigorous time frame for the data collection**, over three distinct phases (the first phase took place before the end of the first year; the second phase during the course of each residency; and the final phase between the last residency and the official ending of the project).

The pandemic impacted upon the mobility of the artists and this forced a reformulation and adaptation of activities. Virtual encounters were set up to identify alternative ways to give continuity to the project activities, and to encourage the sharing of practical solutions to navigate the contextual complexity (including the economic complexity). This virtual proximity and state of "detached togetherness" allowed the continuity of the research activity, but the initial work plan has been reconfigured (see pictures in the annexes).

The pandemic made it impossible for both dance artists and organisations to deliver residencies and implement their projects with live audiences. It was necessary to abandon direct observation.

The researchers had to adapt their initial research questions and timeline by **refining the research objectives with pandemic circumstances in mind**. The residency programme was suspended - workshops and seminars took place online. Work taking place at a local level intensified and became a priority.

The constant and assiduous moments of online exchange made it possible for the researchers to strengthen their relationship with the artists and with the staff of the organisations most involved in the project implementation.

Direct in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation, workshops and seminars and study of the activities produced by the artists, have enabled the researchers to accompany the reframing of the project by each local team, **shifting the focus from the sectoral to the local perspective**.

The active or mediated participation in the research of artists, curators, mentors and facilitators has meant that the researchers have gained a better understanding of the work being done by these contributors. The data collected has generated a **research framework threefold in its nature: contextual, process-driven and emotional**.

The main phases of the research

Despite the reconfiguration of the plan, the research followed the steps and the collection of information necessary for the creation and implementation of **value chains for each local team**, and then the articulation of an overall **project value chain**.

Data gathering was defined as follows:

GROUND ZERO: where we are now. Exploratory research activities (from October 2018 to December 2019)

Kick-off meeting in Vitry-sur-Seine (October 2018);
researchers presenting the initial research plan and approach

Study of output generated during Dancing Museums 1 (DM1)

Kick-off quantitative data collection

Seminar 1 in Nottingham (May 2019)

Kick-off in-depth interviews with artists, dance organisations, museums, mentor and facilitator

PHASE ONE: setting common goals and co-imagining futures (from May 2019 to December 2019)

Workshop 1 in Bassano del Grappa (August 2019).
This took place as planned with partners gathering on location.

Workshop 2 in Vitry-sur-Seine (December 2019).
This took place as planned, with partners gathering on location.
Researchers presented their first interim report and the Theory of Change approach.

PHASE TWO: supporting participants & supporting understanding of the Theory of Change approach (January 2020 - December 2020)

As a result of COVID-19, Seminar 2 in Bonn was cancelled (March 2020).
This was the first element of DM2 affected by COVID-19.

Online Workshop 3 "Prague" (June 2020).
This workshop took place virtually, with all attendees joining from their home countries.

Online Session 1, Working on the glossary (July 2020)

Online Session 2, Working on the glossary (September 2020)

Online Workshop 4 "Barcelona" (November 2020).
The workshop was entirely online even if the Barcelona team was able to stay together but the rest of the partners were not allowed to travel.

PHASE THREE: Value Chain analysis & general recommendations (from January 2021 to September 2021)

Online Workshop 5 "Nottingham" (March 2021).
The workshop was entirely online even if the Nottingham team was able to stay together but the rest of the partners were not allowed to travel.

Online Seminar 3 & Workshop 6 "Rotterdam" (July 2021).
The workshop was entirely online even if the Rotterdam team was able to stay together but the rest of the partners were not allowed to travel.

Final Conference (October 2021)
This was a 'blended' event, with some partners attending on location in Bassano del Grappa and at Arte Sella, and others joining online.

There are several elements to address:

/ Each milestone of the project, both on location and online (workshops, seminars, participants meetings, national and international meetings) **has been considered as part of the research process**. They were conceived as opportunities to monitor and update the process.
They were essential moments to:

> / follow the evolution of the artistic and organisational research paths at the local level, and their impact on the consortium
>
> / share and get closer to dance artists' practices and proposals
>
> / observe the natural development of relational dynamics among
> the participants
>
> / analyse the evolution of the language towards a common glossary
>
> / analyse the main topics which the consortium addressed and cared about

/ Though the artistic **residencies were at the core of the project** development and research framework, they are not precisely reported in the previous list of phases. In fact, where and when they went ahead (despite the pandemic), they were scheduled and managed individually according to the local context and the availability of the local team.

/ Though the main research steps together with methods and touchpoints were clearly defined and scheduled in the data collection plan, **the research plan as the project progressed, respected participants' availability and their specific context** or organisational issues.

Milestones along the project

Main phases and goals of the research

Local team perspective

Sectoral perspective

Picture 1
The research activity detail in 2019

2019

PHASE ONE
setting common goals and co-imagining futures

Where we are now

Continuous short updates from dance artists

KICKOFF MEETING
Vitry
October 2018

Researchers sharing the initial research plan

Survey online (May—July 2019)

Entry in depth interviews (February—December 2019)

SEMINAR 1
Nottingham
May 2019

3 Focus Groups

Participant observation

WORKSHOP 1
Bassano del Grappa
August 2019

Participant observation

Collecting interview with artist

WORKSHOP 2
Vitry
December 2019

Participant observation

Researchers presemting their first interim output

Picture 1
The research activity detail in 2019

☆ Milestones along the project

● Main phases and goals of the research

● Local team perspective

● Sectoral perspective

2020

PHASE TWO
supporting paricipants & facilitating the Theory of Change Approach

● Supporting and monitoring through regular meeting

● Drafting value chain

● Activating a small group engaged in the evaluation process

SPREADING OF PANDEMIC FROM COVID—19
Mobility suspended
Seminar in Bonn cancelled
March 2021

ONLINE WORKSHOP 3
"Prague"
June 2020

SESSION 1
Working
on glossary
July 2020

SESSION 2
Working
on glossary
September 2020

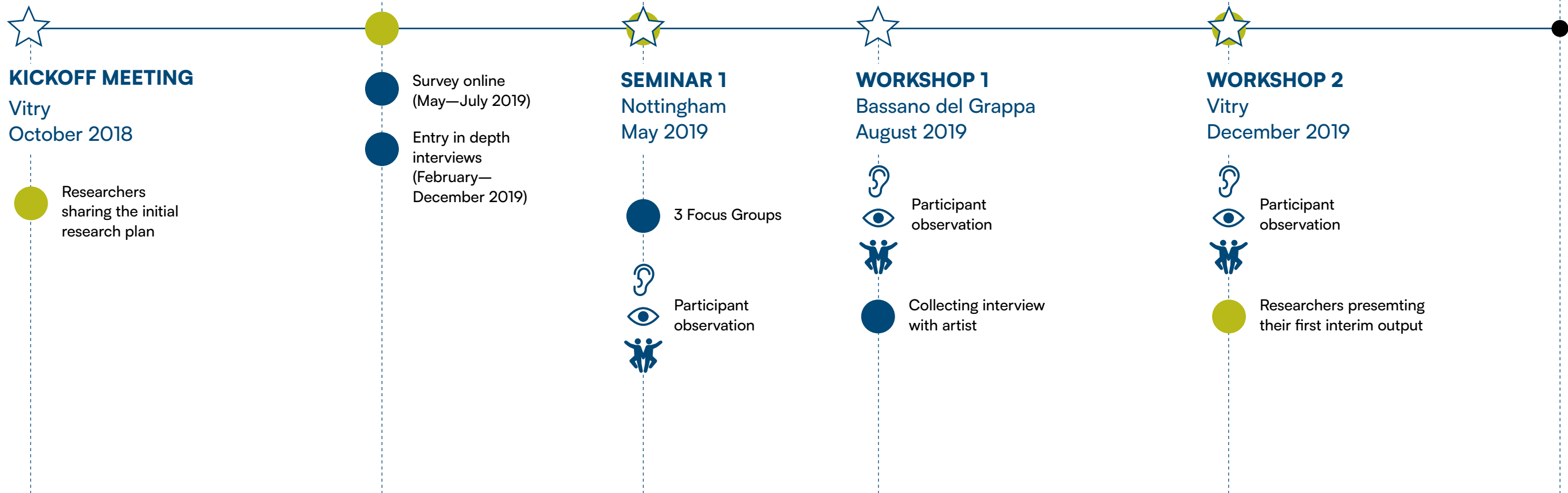**ONLINE WORKSHOP 4**
"Barcelona"
November 2020

Participant observation

☆ Milestones along the project

● Main phases and goals of the research

● Local team perspective

● Sectoral perspective

2021

Picture 1
The research activity detail in 2019

PHASE THREE
Value Chain analysis & general recommendations

ONLINE WORKSHOP 5
"Nottingham"
March 2021

**ONLINE WORKSHOP 6
& SEMINAR 3**
"Rotterdam"
July 2021

**FINAL
CONFERENCE**
Italy
October 2021

Local team Sessions
January—February 2021

Validation of the local
team Value Chains
May 2021

Evaluation Report
September 2021

Ground Zero

WHERE WE ARE NOW

The first phase of the analysis consisted of **understanding the state of play of the consortium** by collecting prior general information and investigating **initial ambitions and expectations**, individually from:

1) the project mentor and the advisor
2) dance organisations and museums
3) artists

This phase was exploratory in character, in order to gain an understanding of the different and numerous participants in the project. It enabled the researchers to introduce the research approach as something that supported participants.
It also enabled them to actively contribute to the development of the project, taking care to set an atmosphere of listening and mutual respect. It was fundamental to understand specific elements and to share reflections that have formed the basis of the following research activities:

/ local and organisational contexts
/ different structures for each local partnership
/ initial ambitions and expectations
/ perceptions about each individual's role in the project (including desires and concerns) as well as sharing approaches
/ practices, ways of working, creative ideas, especially with the dance artists.

Including contributors to DM1 was a great opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of the previous edition, in terms of successes and failures.

It is worth remembering that an EU cooperative project benefits from an initial sharing of values to comprehend each other's ambitions, priorities, needs and goals. The responsibility of the researcher lies in facilitating the exchange, gathering the different perspectives, and building a common ground of mutual understanding.

1.
Methodology

THE MENTOR AND THE ADVISOR

We started by conducting two **in-depth interviews** with the **mentor of the artists of DM1 and DM2 — Betsy Gregory** — and the **advisor — Gill Hart**. Their insight (both took part in DM1) was a valuable source of empirical enrichment for researchers and helped in focusing on the main topics related to the ontology of the project.

«DANCE» PROJECT PARTNERS & MUSEUMS (INCLUDING *MUSEUM PARTNERS* & *MUSEUM ASSOCIATES*)

This phase of the research was aimed at framing the state of play of the network by collecting preliminary information about the organisations, in terms of mission, vision, activities, data collection processes, and on staff members and audiences.

This overview was developed using:

/ CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview). These were sent to all members of the consortium to build a picture of the diversity of individuals and organisations taking part in the project (in terms of scale of organisation, type of activities, finances, sources of funding, members/artists, employees, annual visiting figures, events organised for the general public, events organised for specific target groups, participants in workshops/ participatory projects organised for specific target groups, pricing strategies) and of current data collection processes and available information about audiences at each location. The CAWI was launched in early 2019.

/ Entry in-depth interviews with the **senior management of museums and dance organisations** were set up after the first 9 months of implementation of the project. These interviews were included in the exploratory phase of the research and enabled the researchers to understand the first attempts in the triangulation between dance organisations, museums, and artists. The interviews enabled the monitoring of the early activities, ways of working and collaborating between museums and dance organisations, the approach towards artists and their research paths, the communication system and the first findings and discoveries on how choreographic practices can feed the collections of museums. The Interviews provided clarity from the start that each local team was developing an autonomous and distinctive approach by building specific ecosystems to enable participation from staff members of both organisations. These interviews evidenced the project's role in changing people's way of thinking and ways of collaborating.

THE ARTISTS

Entry in-depth interviews with all **6 artists** involved in the project were conducted. The purpose of these interviews was to collect their early impressions (after the first residency), their level of engagement, the artists' creative ideas, interests, and how they worked in the museum context.

2.

Main evidence

This first phase of the research was aimed at **understanding the context of action, the unique characteristics of the partners and their expectations**. For the research team, it was crucial to collect a valuable set of information both from the partners involved in DM1 and from those new in DM2.

THE VARIETY OF PARTICIPANTS

The project participants represent a diverse group of private and public-funded organisations that are large and small in terms of budget or staffing, were involved in DM1 or were completely new to the project. These factors were taken into account in the evaluation process.

THE TENSION BETWEEN ARTISTIC RESEARCH AND THE EXPECTATION TO PRODUCE OUTPUTS

The experimental nature of DM1 remained a key aspect of DM2. Neither project focused on producing a dance performance in museums. Rather, both are based on artistic research as the result of a process of co-creation, constant mediation and peer-to-peer learning. This aspect, despite being an integral part of an artist's work, met with some resistance from partners. It took time to shift the focus from what can be co-created to figuring out how to do it.

VALUE-DRIVEN APPROACH

This project was value-driven, in every sense. The ultimate goal for all contributors was to create value for participants. At the same time, it was vital that there were shared values across the contributors: cooperation, inclusion, acknowledging diversity and care. Sustaining these principles required regular exchange, moments of reflection and clarification.

The exchange of views and constant negotiation was possible due to the partners commitment to creating a safe space based on mutual trust and respect. This was achieved precisely because the principles and values underlying the project were made explicit from the outset.

ENABLING CONDITIONS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Including the PAR approach applied to this project, much attention was paid to the processes and the conditions that enabled activities to take place. The research was particularly committed to emphasising the elements, patterns and distinctive characteristics each local group had in common. This was done by researchers constantly questioning why certain actions were taking place.

Enabling conditions were fundamental and became outcomes enriched by the process itself. This was observed at local and trans-local levels. Investigating the enabling conditions was a fundamental step to acquire a shared awareness around the main issues of the project, to build a common ground of reflection and to underline the specificities of each local context.

DANCE ARTIST AS FACILITATOR

Dance artists made contributions that went beyond their presence as dancers. They created a climate of trust and confidence - where risk could be collectively embraced.

Their involvement contributed to change within the museums in terms of self-perception (history, values, spaces and collections, work processes) and in the way change was perceived by stakeholders (staff, audiences, and partners). This was experienced to different degrees in different locations.
Creating the right conditions for the artist to play the role of facilitator was fundamental: making time for formal and informal exchanges were the main prerequisites for the artist to feel part of the museum context.

FOLLOWING A COMMON PATH

Dance artists had individual ideas about audience engagement, however recurring patterns emerged across all the research paths:

1) Initial listening, observing, and being confident in the space
2) Exploring the spaces of the museums and meeting all the staff members
3) Building a common ground and setting shared goals
4) Developing a practice based on questioning, investigating, experiencing, and testing
5) Establishing external collaboration and partnerships.

MUSEUMS ARE MORE THAN BUILDINGS AND ARTWORKS

Dance artists provided alternative interpretations for the museum (or museums). This was applied within the walls and beyond, ranging from interpretation of spaces, people and the museum's history to embarking on an ecosystemic relationship with the local social, economic, and cultural context.

Phase One

SETTING COMMON GOALS TO CO-IMAGINE FUTURES

1.

Methodology

During the first Seminar *Why place dance in a museum/gallery?* organised in Nottingham (10th-16 May 2019), the research team facilitated 3 FOCUS GROUPS for **dance organisations**, **museums**, and **artists**. At this stage, individuals were grouped according to discipline rather than according to which geographically-located team they were part of.

In accordance with the TOC approach, **the focus groups gave voice to areas of work that contributors felt would be within their power to change**. Contributors shared their expectations, ambitions, goals, and ways of working. This exercise created a **comprehensive impact vision defined by common objectives**.

An environment based upon trust, participation and collaboration was set up for the partners to interact with each other. This was essential for data collection that then informed the development of value chains.

The focus groups started by using the *EVIDENCE MODELLING* tool. Evidence Modelling is an exercise designed to help participants visualise the scale of their ambition and the impact they want to generate. Participants were asked to imagine being in 2021 at the final conference of DM2 and to write a headline and two paragraphs of a review or article about the project's achievements. After reflecting on this individually, participants took part in group discussions. This approach highlighted differences in expectations. Distinctive cultural, social, and political backgrounds were considered, alongside the diverse artistic approach of the people involved.

Accentuating the differences at this early stage, made it possible to connect similarities and commonalities at a later stage. This phase of the analysis also enabled the **recognition of common approaches, challenges and solutions** activated by all partners - beyond their local context.

The focus group ended with the *Give & Gain Exercise*. This methodology is based on equity and shared responsibility and starts on the premise that everyone has something they can give to the project, and everyone has something to gain. The exercise:

/ acknowledges the existence of potential assets within the community at any point in time. As a team, participants begin to realise how they can tap into each other's potential to problem solve. Give & Gain negates the tendency of communities to define themselves in terms of their problems, needs and deficiencies and discourages participants from internalising their negativity (Susan J. Erenrich, Jon F. Wergin, *Grassroots Leadership and the Arts For Social Change (Building Leadership Bridges)*, 2017).

/ enables participants to see themselves as a part of a community from whom they can learn and care with. (Caoimhe McAvinchey, Fabio Santos, Lucy Richardson, *Phakama: Making Participatory Performance*, London, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2018).

In the context of DM2 it highlighted once again the expectations of participants but also made visible the **variety of competencies, skills, and attitudes that were needed for, and activated by the complexities of this project**. This moment of sharing promoted the **commitment of each participant** to the project success, **valuing everyone's capability and responsibility for the group**.

2.
Main evidence

Starting from the assumption that the Participatory Action Research was intrinsic to the whole project and could be used to rethink and reshape actions, the research team facilitated mutual exchange, sharing of perspectives and encouraged the emergence of different points of view, approaches, and ways of working.

The work in groups - dance organisations, museums, and artists - enabled the emergence of expected impacts for each respective discipline.

These initial focus groups allowed an initial in-depth engagement with different visions, knowledge and languages, resulting in the first attempt at a **shared vocabulary**.

It is important to underline the input from the institutions involved in DM1 who shared their experience, approaches and methodologies with the group.

What follows is a summary of the main evidence distinguished by the three groups.

Museums

The **expectations** and **ambitions** of Museum partners can be expressed on three interconnected and sequential levels:

Picture 4
Museums' main ambitions

1

NEW CONCEPT OF MUSEUM

- As a living and democratic space
- *Museum as a living and democratic house for all the citizens (fostering an active participation)*
- Active citizenship and inclusion — Active participation
- *Dancers should not be an ornament*
- As an open toolbox where arts meets with no hierarchy
- New generative form of ecological & sustainable heritage

2

- Artist as part of the staff
- *All museum staff are involved as well as choreographers and dance organisation staff*
- Holistic & transdisciplinary approach
- Horizontal approach
- Mutual capacity building and empowerment

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND PARADIGM SHIFT

3

NEW APPROACHES TO EXPERIENCE MUSEUM, SPACES AND ARTWORKS

- *Dance as a part of the knowledge of visitors / a way to experience the museum in a different way*
- Audience and community engagement
- *Elaborating a new way for the coexistence between new creative paths and old artworks*
- Creative approaches
- Meaningful experience
- *Inhabit museums spaces through meaningful experiences*

2.1

Museums

The **expectations** and **ambitions** of Museum partners can be expressed on three interconnected and sequential levels:

1

Contributing to the redefinition of the **concept of the museum** beyond the geographical confine of the project (e.g. global):

/ an **inclusive, polyphonic, accessible, welcoming space open to all**
/ aware of the conflicts and challenges of the present
/ able to be a **vital, living,** and **meaningful space for citizenship**.

2

A shift towards a more horizontal **organisational structure**, characterised by:

/ an holistic **process-oriented view** (rather than an output-oriented one),
/ a focus on **staff empowermen**t and **involvement** marked by an **intra-departmental collaboration**, a **shared or negotiated decision making**.
/ a **multidisciplinary working method** consisting of a constant hybridisation of knowledge, competencies and approach

3

To initiate new ways of relating to and **engaging audiences** by:

/ creating **meaningful experiences**, based on **active participation**
/ through creative **dance-based routes into engaging with museum collections**;

A **hybrid form of creation connecting live performance with artworks** hanging on the walls was perceived as the thread linking the three expected outcomes. The processes, commitments and dialogues required in advance of such art experiences, were considered of equal value as the outcome itself. The aim of DM2 was not just to juxtapose the dance artist with the museum collection. Rather, the presence - and the gaze - of the artist was intended as an enabler for alternative ways of reading museum routes, collections and spaces. What emerged, at different intensities, was the need for museum staff to **change ways of working, having been exposed to alternative insights and perspectives**, yet remaining aligned to the museum's goals and activities.

A new concept museum

LONG TERM IMPACT

A living and democratic house to endorse active citizenship and inclusion

A meaningful place for citizens and visitors

Generative form of ecological & sustainable heritage

An open toolbox revitalised by dance

A space where new creative paths and old artworks can merge

An open space to experience

Picture 5
Investigating museums' long term impact

Longer-term this can lead to a museum as:

/ a living and democratic place to endorse active citizenship and inclusion;

/ a meaningful place for citizens and visitors;

/ an open toolkit revitalised by dance;

/ an open space to experience;

/ a space where old artworks and new creative paths can converge;

/ a space of generative forms of ecological & sustainable heritage.

2.2

Dance Organizations

The **expectations** and **ambitions** of the dance organisations were also expressed on three levels:

Picture 4
Dance Organizations' main ambitions

1 ADVOCACY FOR DANCE

Dance as a human right

Large impact scale on the whole dance sector, contributing to the definition of what dance can mean now

Advocating for dance as giving space for citizens, engagement with the body

Dance as a new form of heritage and a bridge to the future

Dance generates the sense of the future

Moving body as vehicle: creativity, expression, experience, empathy, connections

Empowerment of dance sector — new skills/tools/ storytelling

Choreography as a toolbox

2

Artist as part of the staff

Holistic & transdisciplinary approach

Horizontal approach

Trust among organisations / mutual support / relational exchange

Mutual capacity building and empowerment

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND PARADIGM SHIFT

3

NEW WAY TO EXPERIENCE DANCE

Audience and community engagement

Body as a vehicle for sensorial experiences

Sensible touch, changing use of space, pervasiveness of moving in the space, change of viewpoints

New ways to experience dance performances

2.2

Dance Organizations

The **expectations** and **ambitions** of the dance organisations were also expressed on three levels:

1

Advocating dance as an embodied form of heritage.
Dance organisations expressed the hope that the research process would lead to advocating a role for movement in creativity and self-expression, as an enabling experience that can lead to empathy and connection. Seeing **choreography as a tool** to **legitimise a range of expressions**, **feelings** and **creative responses**.

2

Creating non-hierarchical spaces for dialogue between dance and heritage organisations.

3

A desire to engage audiences in new ways, to experience dance in the museum space. This would effect a change in the point of view of both the dance artist and what would ordinarily be described as the 'spectator' outside the conventional space of a theatre.

LONG TERM IMPACT

Advocacy for dance

Dance as human right

Dance as a new form of heritage

Dance as a bridge to the future

Moving body as a vehicle of expression, creativity, experience, empathy, connections

Empowerment of dance sector in term of new skills, tools, storytelling
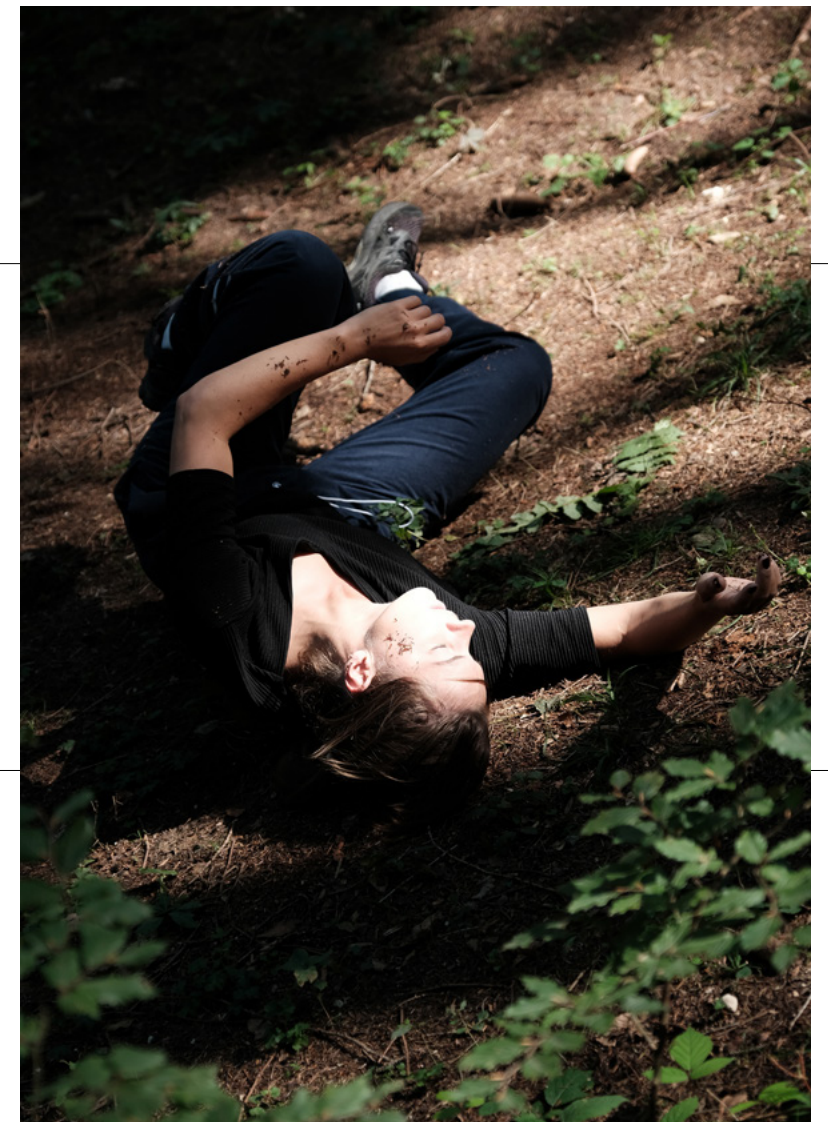
Picture 5
Investigating museums'
long term impact

For the dance sector this means:

/ advocating dance as a human right

/ seeing dance on an equal footing with material cultural heritage

/ looking to a future where dance is a bridge and a link between different perspectives

/ understanding the moving body as a vehicle of expression, creativity, experience, empathy

/ empowering the dance sector in terms of skills, competencies, tools, expertise.

These ambitions take on greater relevance in cultural institutions, often characterised by hierarchical organisational models and siloed functions (whether they are active in the field of heritage or in that of performing arts). In this context, introducing a dance artist into a museum, and working in synergy with a dance organisation, should facilitate a dialogue, which would otherwise not be easily achieved.

Creating dedicated time and space for the research process led to a suspended time and "liminal spaces" in which experimentation and hybridisation of divergent points of view were possible. These conditions are even more essential when change is entrusted to a subject (the dance artist) who must move between two institutions whose collaboration is usually aimed at an immediate output (e.g an exhibition or a performance).

DM2 stimulated a safe frame for experimentation that should continue beyond the end of the project.

2.3

Dance Artists

The focus group with the artists took a different direction as the idea of identifying ambitions and impacts at an early stage was not suited to their way of working.

Artists felt the **priority** was not located within definable ambitions. For them, a priority was the **enabling conditions** for them to work well. The first meeting was used to identify some methodological cornerstones to assist and respect their role and contribution to the project:

/ the need to develop a **relationship** that is led by the dance artists, but mutually supported, to help them succeed
/ the idea that the artist should be on equal footing with dance organisations and museums and be able to communicate clearly and honestly with them, **without hierarchy**.

Another priority was **collaboration**. Artists perceived ambitions and impacts as the results of a process of **mediation** and **dialogue** with the local team and not just about the artists' interests and capacity. Clarifying this from the outset derived from the need of the artists not to be perceived as the only ones responsible for the project development, success or failure.

In parallel to that, the activity highlighted some of the expected outcomes and direct benefits of DM2:

/ acquisition of skills, mainly soft skills
/ establishing of multi-disciplinary relationships
/ networking opportunities
/ stable income
/ more time to research
/ freedom to work without commissions on creative processes, and research.

Assumptions

Developing a **relationship** that is led by the artists, but mutually supported, to help the artists to achieve the best they can.

The artist should **be on equal footing** with Dance Organisations and Museums and to be able to communicate clearly and honestly with them, **without hierarchy**.

All the artists should be able to articulate their own journey and develop their ideas through the project, so that by the time we get to the workshops in their city, they are able to make the concept of what should happen in that time, linking Dance Organisations and Museums. **Translocal approach**

Phase Two

**SUPPORTING PARTICIPANTS
& FACILITATING THE THEORY
OF CHANGE APPROACH**

1.

Methodology

2020 was the second year of the project. COVID-19 impacted the project and weakened one of the original pillars: the relationship between cultural organisations and audiences.

It also provoked radical change nationally and internationally. The pandemic suspended mobility, shut down cultural organisations and spaces, and imposed physical distancing. It was impossible to conduct residencies as originally planned however, use of the digital domain accelerated.

As reported in the research roadmap, the **research team supported participants in reframing the project and reprogramming activities** at sectoral, local and consortium level. Researchers also processed all the data, information and materials collected. Using the TOC approach to dig deeper into the process enabled the **development of the value chains** (for full definition of TOC see page 81). This was done in a mutually beneficial way.

What is a value chain?

A Value Chain is one of the most relevant tools within the Theory of Change Framework. It is a logical and graphic model, making it possible to trace the entire process through which the change is generated, with reference to the main ambitions of the project.

The change (or impact) is something that organisations want to consciously and strategically generate through their actions. The value chain supports reflection about all the steps and elements relevant to generating that impact. It represents a reflective and learning evaluation tool with a circular feedback loop.

The main elements in the Value Chain are:

INPUTS

tangible and intangible resources put into the project development process (including energy, attitudes, skills, enabling conditions spaces, technical equipment);

ACTIVITIES

what was done, both within the organisations and within the local team/context, to make the project happen and get to its ambitions;

OUTPUTS

this is the most concrete, quantitative and measurable element of the project and activities mostly as a team (including artifacts, meetings, workshops, dance practices);

OUTCOMES

this is a more qualitative part of what has been generated through the project and activities (both as individuals and as a team). Outcomes represent the meaning and the mid-term effect of what has been done. They measure the achievement of given objectives and must measure the change produced. This implies that there is always a starting point (which tends to be known, better if measurable) and an endpoint (to be verified through measurement).

IMPACT

long-term effects and changes generated in the community by the activities carried out by an organisation (or project, intervention, initiatives). The impact is the portion of the total outcome that has occurred as a direct result of the intervention, as opposed to the portion that would have occurred regardless of the intervention.
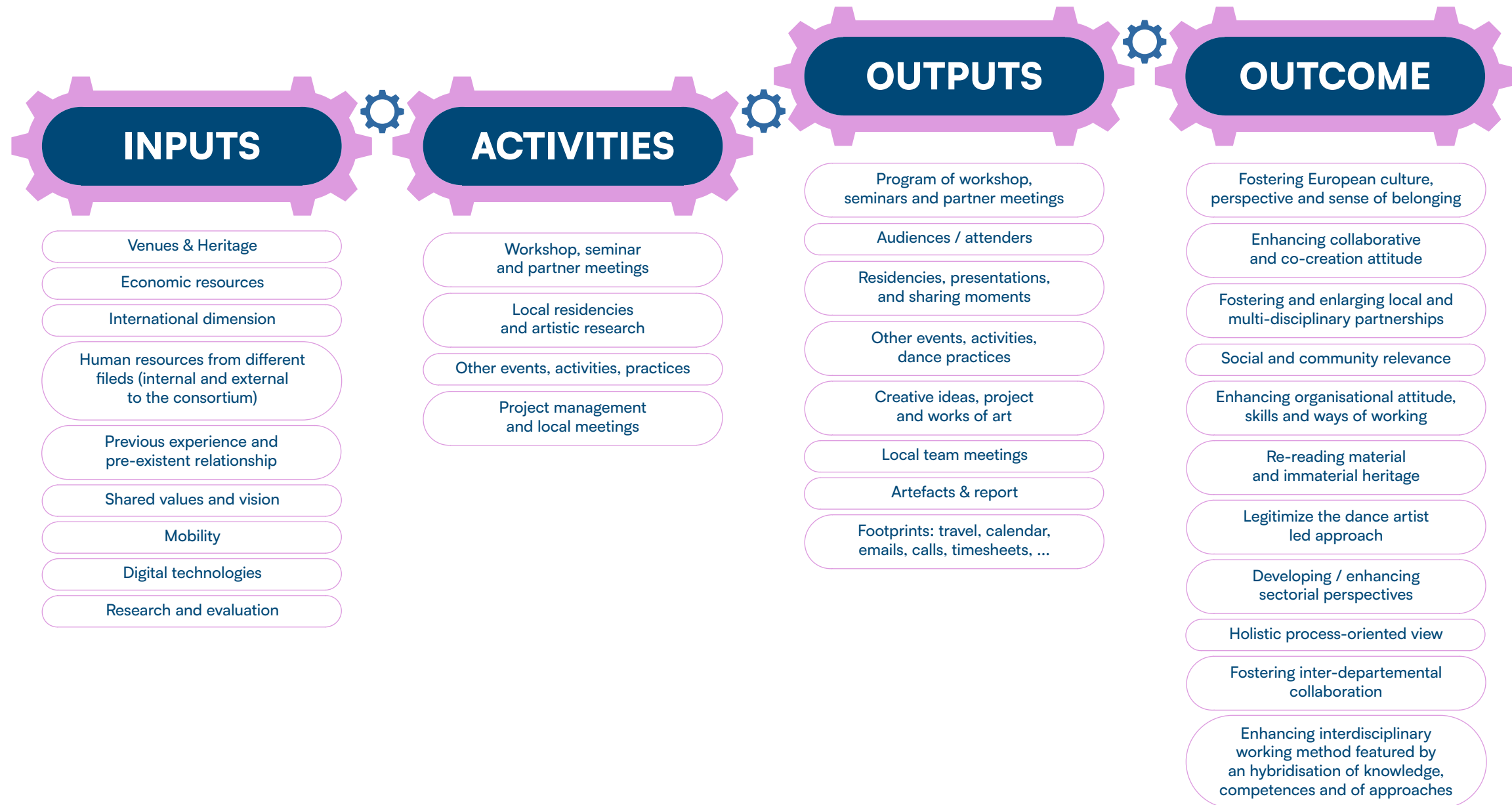
The TOC model can be read as a logical series of elements interconnected by causal and consequential ties, following the chain INPUTS → ACTIVITIES → OUTPUTS → OUTCOMES → IMPACT or backward, but it also allows for free movement through the elements and trying to establish meaningful and relevant connection.
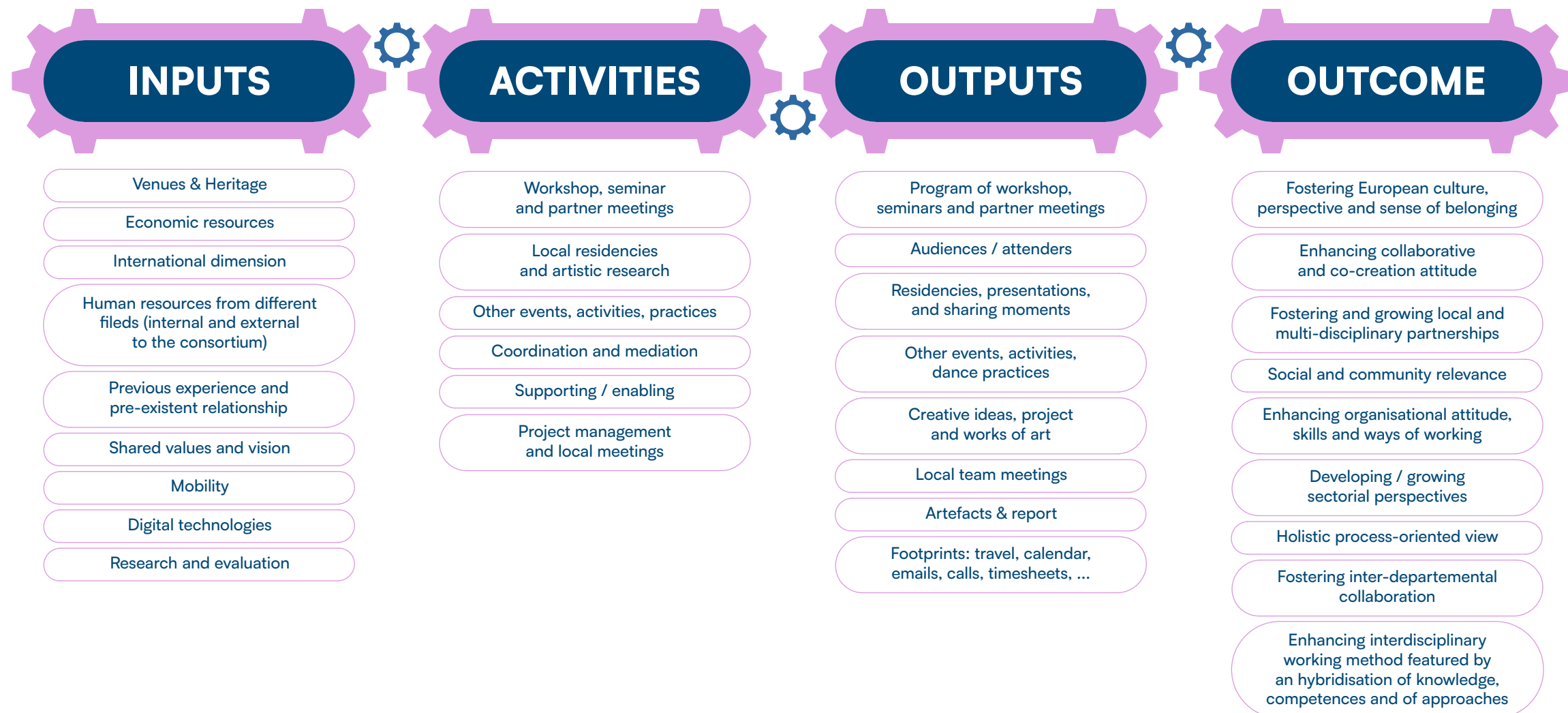
2.

Main evidence

The value chains were elaborated according to the expected impacts expressed in the initial funding application and in the intended change identified at the first step of the research activity in the form of **sectoral shared ambitions**. Researchers focused on two of the main project's beneficiaries: dance organisations and museums.

The impact evaluation on audiences was part of another research study, which has been reformulated and redirected to other themes, as it was not easy to fulfil this requirement due to Covid-19 restrictions.

2.1

Museums' Value Chain

INPUTS
- Venues & Heritage
- Economic resources
- International dimension
- Human resources from different fileds (internal and external to the consortium)
- Previous experience and pre-existent relationship
- Shared values and vision
- Mobility
- Digital technologies
- Research and evaluation

ACTIVITIES
- Workshop, seminar and partner meetings
- Local residencies and artistic research
- Other events, activities, practices
- Project management and local meetings

OUTPUTS
- Program of workshop, seminars and partner meetings
- Audiences / attenders
- Residencies, presentations, and sharing moments
- Other events, activities, dance practices
- Creative ideas, project and works of art
- Local team meetings
- Artefacts & report
- Footprints: travel, calendar, emails, calls, timesheets, ...

OUTCOME
- Fostering European culture, perspective and sense of belonging
- Enhancing collaborative and co-creation attitude
- Fostering and enlarging local and multi-disciplinary partnerships
- Social and community relevance
- Enhancing organisational attitude, skills and ways of working
- Re-reading material and immaterial heritage
- Legitimize the dance artist led approach
- Developing / enhancing sectorial perspectives
- Holistic process-oriented view
- Fostering inter-departemental collaboration
- Enhancing interdisciplinary working method featured by an hybridisation of knowledge, competences and of approaches

Dance organisations' Value Chain

INPUTS

- Venues & Heritage
- Economic resources
- International dimension
- Human resources from different fileds (internal and external to the consortium)
- Previous experience and pre-existent relationship
- Shared values and vision
- Mobility
- Digital technologies
- Research and evaluation

ACTIVITIES

- Workshop, seminar and partner meetings
- Local residencies and artistic research
- Other events, activities, practices
- Coordination and mediation
- Supporting / enabling
- Project management and local meetings

OUTPUTS

- Program of workshop, seminars and partner meetings
- Audiences / attenders
- Residencies, presentations, and sharing moments
- Other events, activities, dance practices
- Creative ideas, project and works of art
- Local team meetings
- Artefacts & report
- Footprints: travel, calendar, emails, calls, timesheets, ...

OUTCOME

- Fostering European culture, perspective and sense of belonging
- Enhancing collaborative and co-creation attitude
- Fostering and growing local and multi-disciplinary partnerships
- Social and community relevance
- Enhancing organisational attitude, skills and ways of working
- Developing / growing sectorial perspectives
- Holistic process-oriented view
- Fostering inter-departemental collaboration
- Enhancing interdisciplinary working method featured by an hybridisation of knowledge, competences and of approaches

At this stage the *trans-local (European Consortium)*, *local* and *organisational* dimensions have been considered in an overall and integrated way, based on the strong interdependence across the three main layers of actions in the project.To capture this, the research team developed an overall value chain, to represent the project in its entirety.

In case study analysis, the local dimension was the one most investigated. However, the trans-local, local and organisational levels are intertwined. Many of the outcomes expected at the organisational level are only possible due to the interaction between the local and the European level and vice versa.
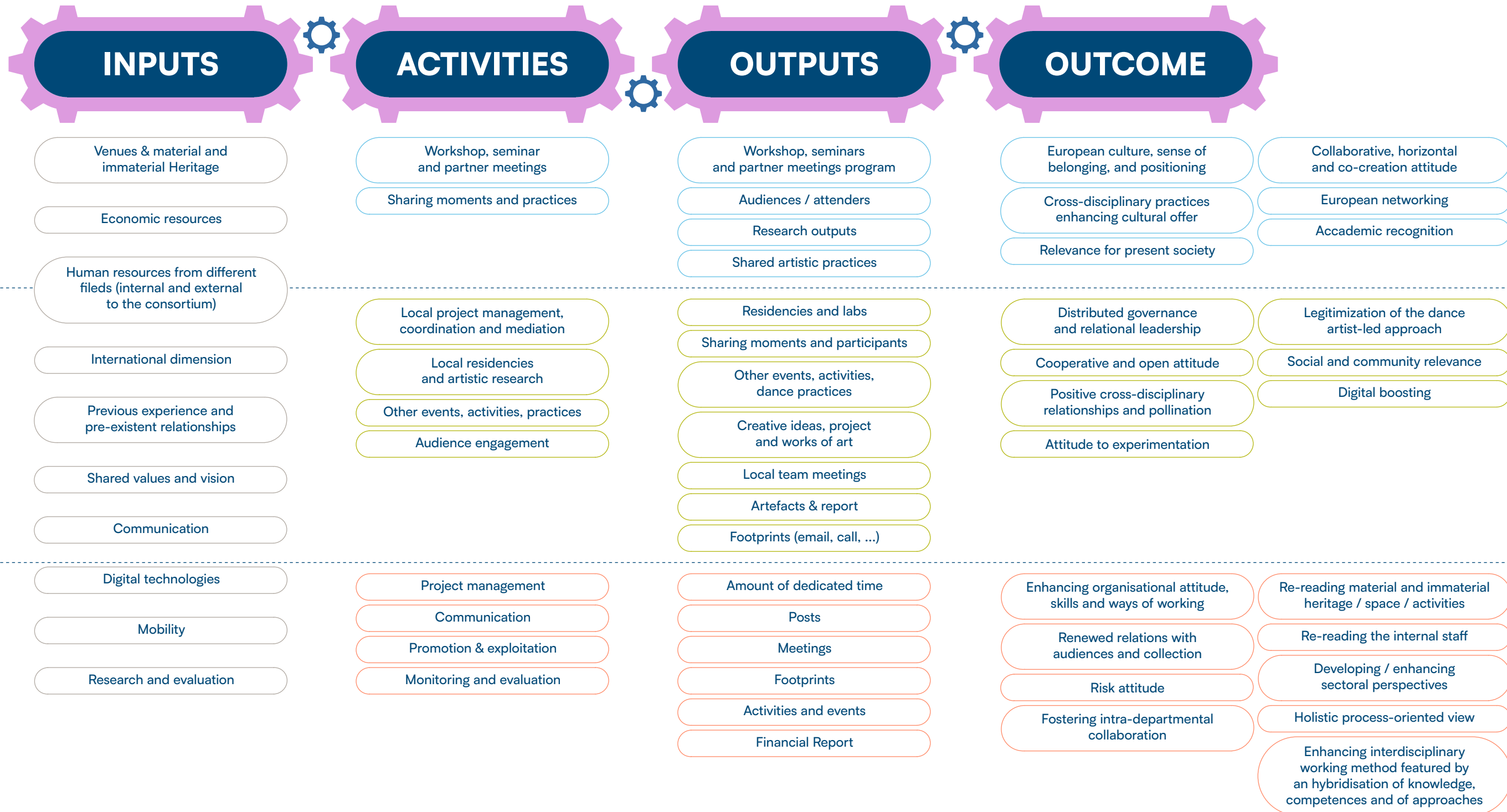
2.2

2.3
Project Value Chain

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOME

TRANS-LOCAL (EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM)

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOME	
Venues & material and immaterial Heritage	Workshop, seminar and partner meetings	Workshop, seminars and partner meetings program	European culture, sense of belonging, and positioning	Collaborative, horizontal and co-creation attitude
Economic resources	Sharing moments and practices	Audiences / attenders	Cross-disciplinary practices enhancing cultural offer	European networking
Human resources from different fileds (internal and external to the consortium)		Research outputs	Relevance for present society	Accademic recognition
		Shared artistic practices		

LOCAL LEVEL

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOME	
International dimension	Local project management, coordination and mediation	Residencies and labs	Distributed governance and relational leadership	Legitimization of the dance artist-led approach
Previous experience and pre-existent relationships	Local residencies and artistic research	Sharing moments and participants	Cooperative and open attitude	Social and community relevance
Shared values and vision	Other events, activities, practices	Other events, activities, dance practices	Positive cross-disciplinary relationships and pollination	Digital boosting
Communication	Audience engagement	Creative ideas, project and works of art	Attitude to experimentation	
		Local team meetings		
		Artefacts & report		
		Footprints (email, call, ...)		

ORGANISATIONAL DYMENSIO

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOME	
Digital technologies	Project management	Amount of dedicated time	Enhancing organisational attitude, skills and ways of working	Re-reading material and immaterial heritage / space / activities
Mobility	Communication	Posts	Renewed relations with audiences and collection	Re-reading the internal staff
Research and evaluation	Promotion & exploitation	Meetings	Risk attitude	Developing / enhancing sectoral perspectives
	Monitoring and evaluation	Footprints	Fostering intra-departmental collaboration	Holistic process-oriented view
		Activities and events		Enhancing interdisciplinary working method featured by an hybridisation of knowledge, competences and of approaches
		Financial Report		

2.4

Indicators and proxies

The following pages present the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and proxies that have been used to assess project outcomes (readers should refer to the diagram on the previous page to be reminded of the specific outcomes that were identified at consortium, local and organisational level).

*Trans-local level
(European Consortium)*

EUROPEAN CULTURE, SENSE OF BELONGING AND POSITIONING + EUROPEAN NETWORKING

/ greater familiarity with the project
/ an enhanced sense of belonging to the European dimension
/ participants are inclined to agree that they would get involved in a European project again in the future
/ participants recognise the added value of being part of the European dimension, e.g. promoting international mobility and professional development of cultural operators, artists and staff members
/ European networking (e. g. consolidated or expanded European contacts; presence and presentation of the project at conference and meetings with other European projects; new contacts and participation in other European projects; contributing to networks and platforms at EU level; external recognition of the value and innovation of the projects)

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES ENHANCING CULTURAL OFFERING

/ the practices developed are given extra-local relevance and/or are interesting for other cultural operators
/ collection of quantitative and qualitative data
/ creating an environment for sharing learning
/ creating a sustainable and positive influence on other cultural organisations in Europe and beyond
/ transferability between what is experienced at the local level and what is shared at the consortium level
/ engaged external experts from different fields

COLLABORATIVE, HORIZONTAL AND CO-CREATION ATTITUDE

/ sharing of democratic human values framing the project
/ creating a safe and open space
/ development of a shared language
/ improving facilitation and mediation
/ boosting resilience
/ collaboration over three years, with a legacy lasting beyond the length of the project

RELEVANCE FOR SOCIETY

/ dissemination among cultural organisations in Europe and beyond
/ contributing to the recognition of cultural heritage and dance as a human right
/ addressing relevant topics in contemporary societies

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION AND DISSEMINATION
(thanks to the contribution of Ca' Foscari University)

/ integration of the DM project into the academic teaching programme, promoting an interdisciplinary way of thinking and making and enriching the scholars' basic knowledge on the growing presence of dance in museums
/ delivering opportunities for scholars and students to interact and experience tangible heritage in a sensorial way
/ delivering academic seminars and conferences

/ organising workshops, symposia and performances as research outcomes
/ collaboration between artists and scholars
/ employing participatory methods to engage local audiences and advocating for dance culture and history
/ international publishing
/ in-depth digital content

Local level

DISTRIBUTED GOVERNANCE AND RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP + COOPERATIVE AND OPEN ATTITUDE

/ effective internal communications
/ level of perceived trust
/ level of perceived respect
/ level of active listening
/ level of perceived mutual supporting
/ level of perceived engagement
/ non-hierarchical spaces for dialogue and relationship
/ equal allocation of responsibilities and possibilities to lead the local team
/ decision making process

LEGITIMISATION OF DANCE ARTIST-LED RESEARCH + POSITIVE CROSS-DISCIPLINARY RELATIONSHIPS

/ common vision and shared goals
/ creation of an open and inclusive environment
/ level of openness in perceiving the dance artist as part of the staff

/ time spent together
/ formal and informal relationships
/ shared language
/ dance as a catalyst for greater access to experience and appreciate art and culture
/ methods and forms of artistic practices bringing new initiatives and curatorial practices
/ perception of long-term relationships

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY RELEVANCE

/ successful approaches and methods in audience-based expertise
/ removing boundaries between spectators and makers to increase audience engagement
/ enhanced awareness of society and relevance to community
/ increased awareness of the relationship between well-being, art and culture
/ engage external individual collaborators and institutions from different disciplines

DIGITAL BOOSTING + ATTITUDE TO EXPERIMENTATION

/ increasing use of digital tools for internal and external communication
/ increasing use of digital tools for developing creative works
/ increasing use of collaborative platforms
/ enhanced digital competences and skills
/ increasing use of digital format to engage audiences and develop communities practices

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: ENHANCING ORGANISATIONAL ATTITUDE, SKILLS AND WAYS OF WORKING
/ shared knowledge and staff engagement
/ boosting hard and soft skills[9]
/ enhanced creative attitude
/ new way of working or work practices
/ acquisition of multi-disciplinary knowledge, practices and perspectives

CATALYST FOR ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE
/ opportunities for experimentation
/ increased appetite for risk, failure and innovation
/ digital and remote boosting
/ rethinking of the physical settings
/ re-reading of tangible and intangible heritage/space/activities
/ improvement of the European project management and monitoring/evaluation system
/ additional funding
/ spill-over activities related to DM2 but external to the consortium
/ perceived chances to scale or prototype practices/projects

[9] According to UNESCO, *Hard Skills* are typically related to the professional or job-related knowledge, procedures, or technical abilities necessary for an occupation. Normally they are easily observed and measured; *Soft Skills* (also known as Non-Cognitive Skills) are"patterns of thought, feelings and behaviours" (Borghans et al., 2008) that are socially determined and can be developed throughout a lifetime to produce value. Soft Skills can comprise personality traits, motivations and attitudes and are vitally important for the employability and adaptability of European citizens.

Phase Three

**VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS
& GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

To conclude the evaluation, an overview of the effect generated by the project in each local context was vital. This was done to understand specific elements and to identify common ground.

The **local context** represents a physical and metaphorical space where, due to the intervention of the dance artist, dance organisations and museums moved beyond their 'comfort zone' to explore alternative arenas of research and experimentation. This enabled **new ways of working and behaving, and new ways of interpreting collections**.

In the local context, multi-disciplinary relational ecosystems were generated. Informal negotiations were set up and established according to the nature of the organisation involved and the local context. For some partners this meant re-thinking approaches and finding a way to understand the role that dance in and of itself can have (without a performance as a measurable output).

1.

Methodology

From a methodological perspective, each value chain was created through the information and data collected during the research process.
This consisted of formalised interviews, updates collected through digital logbooks, focus groups, informal exchange, the analysis of artifacts on the web and social media, direct observation and active participation during workshops and seminars.

The data enabled researchers **to draft a value chain for each local team**. The first draft was shared and negotiated during online focus-groups with each group. Activities carried out by each local team and inputs, (tangible and intangible), were tracked and reported in the framework. The research team facilitated a collective reflection and outcomes were generated in relation to the activities developed locally and those strengthened by the trans-local exchange.

These focus groups created space for **self-reflection** and for **raising awareness** of the implications of the practices developed in terms of ways of working, power relations, empowerment. This highlighted difficulties and divergent viewpoints encountered during the process.

In the focus groups, participants analysed the journey with the dance artist, highlighting elements of conflict, difficulty and resistance, but also opportunities and positivity. The reflection was nurtured by exploring and contextualising the stimuli exchanged on a European level, where diverse cultural approaches, management methods, dynamics of internal relations and collaboration have emerged.

2.

The evidence in detail

The main findings, broken down by the local team, are as follows.

🇮🇹

Bassano del Grappa & Borgo Valsugana *-based Team*
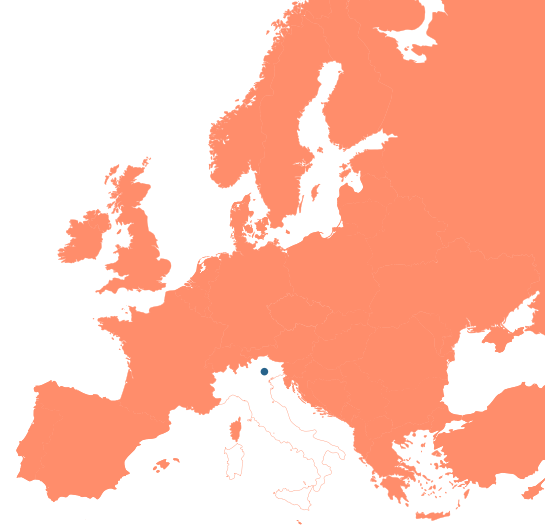
PARTNERSHIP

Museo Civico di Bassano (M)
Associate partner

Arte Sella (M)
Project partner

Comune di Bassano - CSC (DO)
Project partner

Masako Matsushita
Dance artist

Organisations took part in DM1 & DM2 (dance artist was new to project in DM2)

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC

Innovation from cross-fertilisation; focus on social engagement and civic empowerment: from Dancing Museum to Dancing City

Bassano del Grappa & Borgo Valsugana-based Team

CRUCIAL **INPUTS**

/ initial high level of commitment (clear mission and vision of CSC)
/ openness to experimentation and rethinking (space for actions and for change)
/ freedom to express
/ spaces, artworks, and natural world with long-term access for the artist
/ time and care for ongoing conversation
/ staff members
/ soft skills (active listening, dealing with uncertainty, risk management, antifragility[10], inclusion, appreciation of diversity) and attitude (generosity, passion, solidarity, creativity)
/ international dimension
/ pandemic as a stimulant for experimentation

[10] The concept of antifragility was developed by Nassim Nicholas Taleb in his book, Antifragile. Whereas resilience might refer to resisting a shock to the system and then remaining the same, antifragility suggests adaption and improvement.

MAIN **ACTIVITIES**

/ putting the research at the core of the approach
/ listening to the artist and her point of view
/ setting common ambitions, values, ways of working
/ building a task force from scratch
/ brainstorming about possible audiences, activities, and research paths - the process of co-imagination)
/ connecting the artist with the local ecology of museums, city, and landscape
/ integrating DM2 research with museum's needs and emerging needs of civil society
/ artist observing, questioning, interviewing museum staff
/ constant dialogue and working together as a team, questioning language, sharing feedback and reflecting
/ thinking and articulating actions that can affect the everyday life of citizens
/ involving the artist in parallel activities of dance organisations and museums
/ engaging local artists/professionals in some of the project activities
/ acknowledging the absence of the leader inside the Museo Civico di Bassano, turning a challenge into an opportunity
/ co-programming/organising the Bassano workshop - which happened on location pre-pandemic/partner meeting

OUTPUT GENERATED

/ interviews with staff of both museums
/ programme of the Bassano workshop and partner meetings
/ meetings in person and online
/ residencies and informal moments + "artefacts" for communicating and disseminating the process/project
/ artistic practices (Geographical Museum of human identities, Walk map, Dance for the art's sake; Fiction Karaoke)
/ Diary of a move exhibition and short documentary, number of participants, diaries, visitors, and feedback gained from evaluation

OUTCOME GENERATED

/ fostered relational attitude and organisational skills
/ experience in setting non-hierarchical approaches and support systems
/ confidence in taking a 'learning by doing' approach
/ connections between local context and the international dimension
/ reflections on change within the creative process
/ redefinition of 'space' (physical and digital), both for action and change
/ developing a common language (cross fertilisation - creating a new language part based on dance language and part-based on museum language)
/ strengthening soft skills and digital engagement skills
/ the idea for a future project: co-authoring a book about dance
/ theoretical approach creating a common ground between dance and curatorial activities in museums
/ from Dancing Museum to Dancing the City | from an artistic process to an intentional political action
/ collaborating with several other dance artists not involved in DM2

Dancing the city: social engagement beyond the museums' walls

Engagement was at the heart of the Italy-based team's initiatives, both within the partner organisations and with the local community.

"Wearing the hat of the dance artist is about thinking and articulating actions that can affect people not just in the museum dimension, but more broadly in the city, affecting the everyday life of citizens [...]"

The progression of dance as an art form played a meaningful role in connecting (both socially and artistically) people who were physically isolated due to the pandemic, involving them in generating a different and **living form of cultural heritage**.

The nature of dance initiatives, and their potential to engage communities and citizens was re-framed as a form of social engagement. This **increased a sense of ownership and belonging of the museum for everyone involved**.

Dance as human right

The dance artist became an **activist** advocating for dance as a human right and as a form of human expression, including and respecting all humankind, avoiding judgment and enabling new forms of expression and mutual support. This approach represented the transition from an artistic to a political action. Working cross-sectorally was essential to achieve this.

This approach is embedded in the value system of the dance organisation leading this local process. It resonates with the role that a public administration can assume as its mission and vision, to overcome inequalities and engage citizens in cultural activities, fostering a sense of belonging, ownership, and active citizenship. The project represents a solid base to develop a new philosophy, and to renew engagements with civic society.

The human-centred approach and the caring attitude

This approach informed a way of thinking about the museum: the **museum as a living ecosystem**. This goes beyond the architecture, functions, and collections- and focuses instead on a collective of real people to listen to, to take care of, and to value.

Practicing contamination

'Contamination' refers to the relationship between different art forms and, more broadly, connects to the social engagement dimension, addressing the question *"How can I tell others what I do and who I am if nobody cares about that?"*.

This openness to contamination laid the foundations for **creating a common ground**. It can be detected in shared values and in the development of a common language.

Space for actions, space for change: from limits to opportunities

The initial open attitude to contamination, rethinking and exploring new possibilities meant that the team could look at challenges as opportunities.

The pandemic was one of these challenges. It brought common values to the fore and at least two new perceptions emerged:
1) moving the focus from the artworks to people and human relations;
2) questioning what space can be and what it means - physical, digital and symbolic - in terms of creating space for the variety of humankind as a political theory.

Another challenge was the vacancy of the director's post at Musei Civici di Bassano. This led to the risk of immobility, however it became an opportunity to work in a non-hierarchical way. A cross- section of museum staff were engaged in creating a sense of belonging and sharing in the ambitions of the project and responsibility for the delivery of the process. The **cooperative approach** was strengthened and people working in the museums started to naturally get closer both to the project and each other.

The way the dance artist led the project mirrored the intention of the dance organisation: both focused on finding a way to be relevant in civil society, adopting an inclusive and collaborative approach, animated by the desire to create meaningful experiences with citizens rather than for citizens.

Vitry-sur-Seine
-based Team
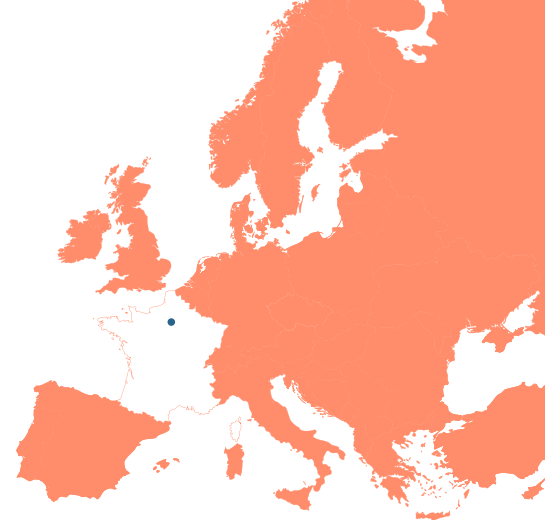
PARTNERSHIP

**MAC VAL - Musée d'Art Contemporain
du Val-de-Marne**
Museum (Project partner)

La Briqueterie - CDCN du Val-de-Marne
Dance organisation (Project Coordinator)

Ana Pi
Dance artist

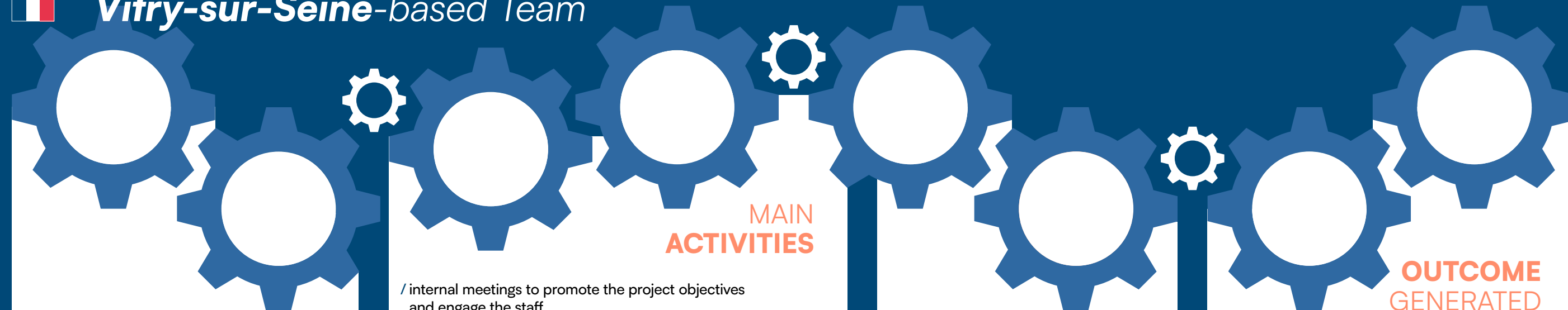Organisations took part in DM1 & DM2
(dance artist was new to project in DM2)

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC

Dance as an evolving artistic expression; exploring new parameters to experience the museum through the body; dance-focused political activism

Vitry-sur-Seine-based Team

CRUCIAL INPUTS

/ a clear frame within which to operate freely (from the outset)
/ openness: being available to test and trial
/ soft skills (sensibility, patience, collaboration, and mediative attitude, being resolute, taking care, taking a creative perspective)
/ institutional conditions, rules, expectations
/ different languages and expertise
/ pandemic and related challenges
/ dance as a means to experiment with the rules
/ urban dance sensitivities

MAIN ACTIVITIES

/ internal meetings to promote the project objectives and engage the staff
/ meetings within the local team (increased during the pandemic)
/ introducing dance artist and the research approach to the staff members of both institutions
/ sharing the institutional mission with the dance artist
/ dance artist dealing with institutional expectations
/ situated observation (spending time together) to gain confidence in the museum
/ making the potential dance and movements that already exist in the museum more visible
/ understanding the different languages and expertise, embodying them into the research
/ brainstorming and figuring out how to collaborate with each other
/ warming up spaces and relationships
/ reflecting together about how to be inclusive (in practical terms)
/ co-programming/organising the Vitry workshop/partner meeting before the pandemic started
/ organising and implementing workshops with different audience groups or other visible interventions (mainly in the museum context)
/ creative propositions to keep the museum staff and the dance organisation connected during lockdown, taking care of emotions, understanding the new reality, keeping research alive and fostering a sense of belonging
/ experiencing and pushing boundaries and rules
/ museum organising the visitor welcome during the dance artist's labs
/ adapting artistic research to the pandemic context, and keeping the project going
/ producing a significant volume and variety of documentation
/ presenting DM2 to several French Universities

OUTPUT GENERATED

/ meetings both in person and online
/ creative "protocol" reserved for staff members of the two organisations during the lockdown
/ residencies + "artefacts" for communicating and disseminating the process/project
/ workshop and other "movement laboratories" with different audience groups (e.g.: "Escultura")
/ programme of the Vitry-sur-Seine workshop/partner meeting (e.g. party, voguing workshop, radio station)
/ new security protocol approved by the director of the museum
/ 'Re-play programme' and audiences reached

OUTCOME GENERATED

/ the staff of both organisations working closely together
/ awareness of dance as an evolutionary act, freeing up the imagination and how we behave
/ a shift in the attitude of the museum security towards welcoming audiences, as well as their attitude towards working together (creating a new meeting point in the hall of the museum)
/ reflection on how to effectively communicate with colleagues
/ awareness of the differences between the two institutions, particularly in their scheduling, organised activities and how they involve audiences (highlighted by the pandemic)
/ awareness of new parameters for participation due to the pandemic
/ Revising the museum spaces (entrance hall) and displacement of the usual museum visit routes

An artist-led process, lending an artistic perspective to the research

The local team revolved around research carried out by the dance artist. The entire process was deeply informed by the dance artist's interests, perspectives, and practices. She established relationships with both organisations through constant and collective sharing among the whole team.

Three themes were addressed and embodied (strongly related to the urban dance approach and activism), informing how staff and audiences were involved by both organisations.

1. Emancipation of the imaginary

"The project is called DM and people are coming and experiencing something that even I don't know what it is in terms of dance. That's why I conserved the premise of engaging in DM to "be open to what could have happened" as a state of mind. The only thing that I did, in terms of not getting lost, was conserving the words I decided to work with from the beginning and always making a kind of a mirror in all of my traces, activities and workshop"

Emancipation (particularly of the imaginary) is a keyword in the research approach followed by the dance artist: it indicated the desire to dovetail the creative process and the ordinary experience of people's lives by disrupting and changing habits. The disruption and habit-changing intention was directed to audiences and the museum staff members (particularly security staff) taking part in

"escultura". Audiences were given survival blankets of the type used by refugees and invited to imagine and create different things (sculptures) with them.

Museum staff were also engaged in the "escultura" experience. They were encouraged to rethink their role in welcoming and orienting the visitor's experience of the museum environment.

2. Dance as an evolutionary act

The dance artist wanted both organisations to experience and become aware of the power that dance can have.

This was the context for the party during the Vitry-sur-Seine workshop; a good example of the power of DM2 to shake up the institution. It was a powerful way to emancipate what our bodies can do within a museum.

3. Experimenting with boundaries and interdictions

From 2020, the artistic research developed in response to Covid-19 and safety measures, which impacted on space, distance, emotions, touching and exposure. The artistic research was a result of a mix between frustration, disobedience and an attempt to find new solutions. There was a strong will to keep the project alive, to make something happen, and to re-establish physical and emotional connections.

The link between these elements was the dimension of intimacy, a word which has guided the

dance artist's research process from the beginning of the project and that during the pandemic became more important. Intimacy, in terms of getting closer emotionally, touch and being touched, was essential to build a trust environment, both as individuals and professionals, and to open the door to a broader institutional trust, as the ground to develop meaningful and cross-disciplinary collaborations.

Different organisations with different needs

Although the institutions had worked together before and were similar in their vision and objectives relating to local community engagement, establishing a synergy was challenging. This may have been due to different time pressures, dynamics and ways of working, particularly in terms of engaging audiences and opening participation in their activities to communities. Covid-19 made this synergy difficult.

At the time of writing, both organisations are simultaneously undergoing a transition at management level which made the development of the project a challenge, in terms of shared ambitions and impacts.

Prague-based
Team

PARTNERSHIP

Prague City Gallery (PCG)
Museum (Associate partner)

Tanec Praha (TP)
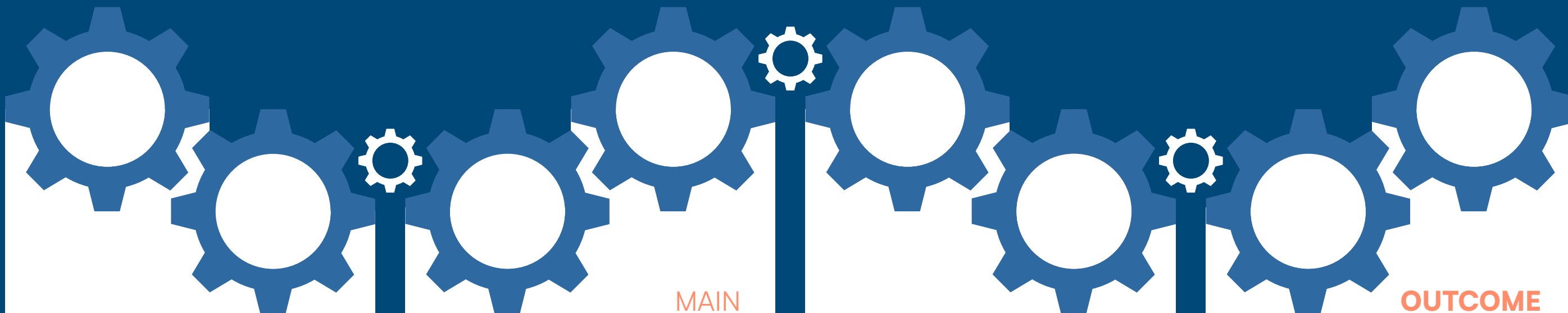*Dance organisation (Project partner)*

Tereza Ondrova
Dance artist

Organisations took part in DM2 only

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC

Leadership as a shared responsibility in an interlinked team

Prague-based Team

CRUCIAL INPUTS

/ ideas from the whole team

/ different expertise, knowledge, and skills

/ flexibility and adaptability in body and mind to think in a different way and outside the usual comfort zone

/ different languages, approaches, methodologies

/ pandemic as a challenge that stimulated experimentation

/ international meetings as enriching/inspiring

/ attitude in working collaboratively

MAIN ACTIVITIES

/ understanding the meaning of the project

/ brainstorming for initial ideas, ambitions, troubles, and themes to find common ground for experimentation between PCG and TP

/ setting initial and collaborative conditions environment

/ setting a horizontal approach for equal and shared responsibility

/ sharing practices/activities involving the two staff

/ establishing interim goals/milestones

/ looking at the galleries systematically and internally

/ involving local professionals from different fields (i.e. tourism)

/ co-programming/organising the Prague workshop (took place entirely online)

/ developing organic, tailor-made and creative digital formats and tools

/ ongoing meetings for small groups and the whole team

/ sharing and discussing mid-term outputs, realised by the dance artist

/ co-curating an exhibition about DM2 and producing a DM2 Book

OUTPUT GENERATED

/ workshops for museum and dance organisation staff

/ programme for Prague workshop (new online format and tools)

/ meetings in person/online

/ residencies and "artefacts" for communicating and disseminating the process/project

/ public sharing

/ dance practices designed for the PCG and the city

/ Prague audio walk

/ final exhibition

/ DM2 book

OUTCOME GENERATED

/ feeling closer as a team

/ adopting a non-hierarchical leadership approach

/ awareness of the staff members skills, contributions and competencies

/ museum being open to other cultural and artistic approaches

/ overcoming the scientific approach, recognising the importance of engaging people in their results

/ museum as a relational hub for citizens and tourists, adopting different ways to narrate and experience the museum's heritage (fun and emotions)

/ fostering a resilient attitude

/ new competencies and skills (in the digital domain)

/ growing personal and professional networks in different fields

/ improved ability in cross-sectoral collaborations

/ long term connections between institutions

/ inspiration from the way others build up their identity

/ learning about the space and the organic relationship with heritage

/ new collaborations with other local professionals from different field

Building collective strengths

Dance Organisations and Museum staff members, nurtured by the approach of the dance artist, built a **common way of working** based on:

/ adaptability

/ embodied dance practices (as a tool and as a new perspective to experience the galleries and the city)

/ exercising creative thinking

/ flexibility

/ resilience

/ respect

/ taking care

Keeping the conversation going and working closely together

"The team was stimulated in keeping the conversation going and gathering all of the contributions that each member could bring."

Challenges and creative proposals presented by the dance artist, were nourished by a **constant dialogue** between the two organisations and their ambitions/needs. This collaborative way of working enabled them to **embed the research process in their ways of working**. From the outset, staff members worked together in a "*neutral and safe space*" built ad hoc for them by the dance artist. This enabled a stronger **sense of belonging and ownership.**

A collaborative, horizontal and inclusive way of working

Partners worked so closely that the team looked entwined. It became hard to recognise or separate the different roles that each of them played in the project. Team members were reciprocally and equally engaged, working together to:

1. achieve their shared and common goals/ ambitions of the project
2. set-up a long-term collaborative relationship which aims to continue beyond the end of the project

The decision-making was an agreed process, based on **horizontal leadership**. Leadership was ground for mutual and shared responsibility, but also for expressing individual values, aims, needs and capabilities. In this sense, **they shared the leadership**.

The role of the dance artist was recognised, valued by the partners, and acted as the glue that gave the activities momentum and held the team together.

Barcelona-based
Team
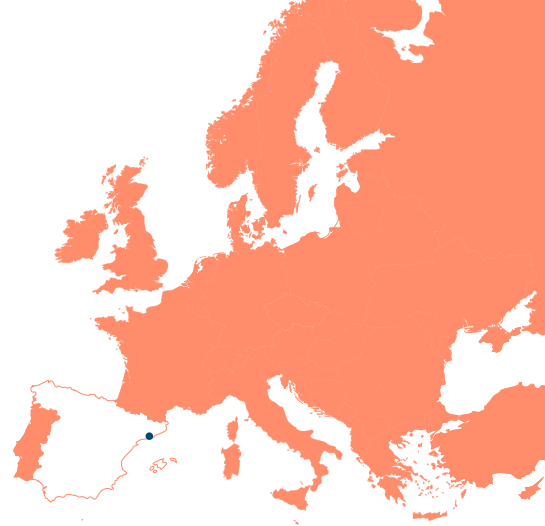
PARTNERSHIP

Fundació Joan Miró
Museum (Associate partner)

Mercat de les Flors
(Project partner)

Quim Bigas
Dance artist

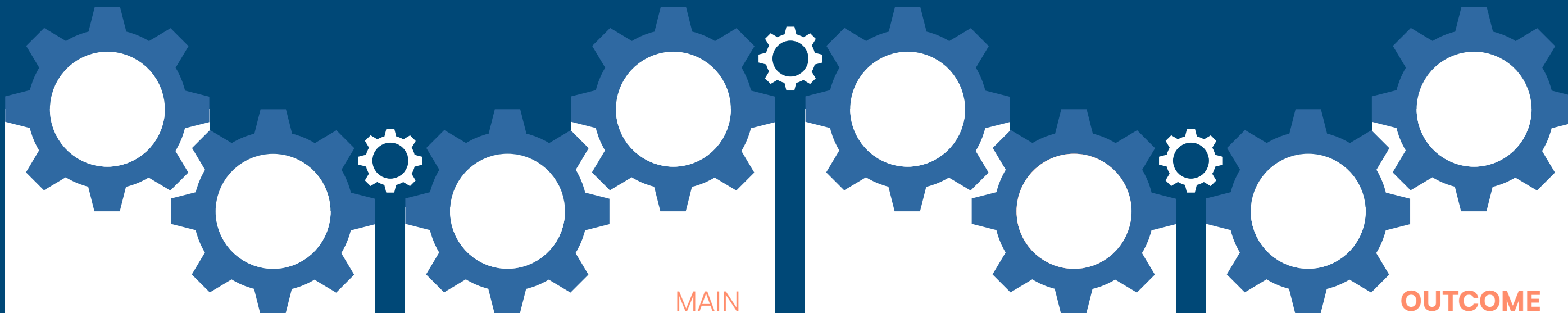Organisations took part in DM2 only

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC

Dance artist as mediator and leader; thinking and acting strategically; artist-led incremental approach

Barcelona-based Team

CRUCIAL **INPUTS**

/ dance artist adopting a caring and listening attitude
/ collaborative approach/ people-centred processes
/ adapting ambitions to reality
/ respect and mutual support inside the working group
/ logistical and operative support for the dance artist
/ creative attitude
/ forward-looking approach: creating ground for future projects
/ pandemic and related challenges
/ ghost dancing: reflection on how to be present when there was a physical distance

MAIN **ACTIVITIES**

/ introducing the dance artist and the research approach to staff of both organisations (director, educational department, conservation, marketing and public relations)
/ dance artist getting to know both organisations, understanding roles and ways of working
/ dance artist mediating between the organisations to set a conceptual framework as a common process of understanding what might be achievable
/ dance artist leading the process of sharing perspectives, approaches and ideas, in an incremental way (to create common ground)
/ all members of the local team met to organise the Barcelona workshop which took place online in November 2020
/ planning and organising DM2 dance artist's residency
/ dance artist's in-depth experience of the museum
/ inspiring conversations between dance artist and museum staff
/ awareness of the dance artist's potential in working in museums or other contexts
/ involving dance artists external to DM2 to dance in the empty museum

OUTPUT **GENERATED**

/ meetings in person and online
/ DM2 residency
/ residencies by artists external to the project
/ "artefacts" for communicating and disseminating the process/project
/ artistic practices (e.g. ghost dancing a dance practice developed by the artist)
/ programme of the Barcelona online workshop/partner meeting

OUTCOME **GENERATED**

/ long term way of thinking
/ museum opening to other cultural and artistic approaches, recognising the potential of dance and movement to rethink displays of the collection
/ museum's awareness of the audiences' heterogeneous approaches to the artworks and the museum space: new trajectory to display the collection and to engage with the museum

Building a bridge: dance artist as mediator and connector between dance organisation and museum

Both organisations experienced setbacks, due to the lack of full engagement at a senior management level. This led to developing a conceptual approach which - particularly during the pandemic - meant managing expectations that were not clear at the outset.

It took the first year to establish what the expectations of the local group were.

Gradually the team started to coalesce around the **leadership of the dance artist**, who led the staff of the two organisations in shaping a process of rethinking based more on **what was feasible** rather than "impossible desires". The dance artist took the responsibility to dive into the research paths and to transfer approaches, methodologies, and ways of working from one organisation to another, generating a common ground nourished by different perspectives with different degrees of intensity and involvement. The **communication and relational systems** developed in tandem rather than as a complete triangulation, with the dance artist as a reference and connecting point for both organisations.

Thinking and acting strategically

The experience of the Barcelona-based team underlines the importance of having the **endorsement of the top management** of the institution, to make real change possible. The Barcelona team devised a **strategy to help them overcome** the absence of the senior leadership teams of both organisations.
They found in the dance artist a leader who could progressively create a trusting environment.

An incremental approach to create a common ground for experimentation

The team adopted an incremental approach, setting up different dynamics and involving different members of staff as and when required. The **Ongoing dialogue** and **exchange**, mostly led by the artist, was essential to build communication and to enable:

/ the development of a **collective approach** and a **shared understanding of the safe ground to co-create** different forms to connect to heritage and its meaning.

The incremental approach, outcomes and findings that came up during a conversation, became the starting point for new ideas. This can be considered a "double-loop" approach, whereby goals or decisions shift on the basis of the experiences of the team.

People-centred approach

The dance artist's presence, contribution and approach, led to the group focusing on establishing: **a trusting relationship, professional esteem and relational dynamics of reciprocity, respect, sense of belonging and togetherness** (both personally and professionally).
This approach was deeply nourished and facilitated by to the soft skills of the artist:
"DM is not about staying in himself and his identity as an artist, but more understanding what that collaboration is about [...] We had a lot of meetings to understand and exchange. That kind of encounter set the ground for most things. Meetings bring quality and affect stronger the reciprocal way of working"

This approach started from the observation, exploration, and exchange inside and outside the museum space and building. It achieved a **reciprocal awareness of the ambitions and expectations** related to DM2.

During the process it became clear there was a need to set up a **common strategic approach to think beyond the project** itself, but also that it was necessary to make concrete ways of working, logistical and technical requirements of the organisations involved.

The dance artist had conversations with the staff of FM to think about the way the permanent collection is displayed, and how to re-hang the paintings. These conversations were based upon the dance artist's experience of the museum space - which he articulated in terms of movement; quite different from the usual feedback a museum curator might receive. This led to a re-display of the collection, informed by the dance artist's perspective and resulting in a different way of looking at the collection and of moving inside the museum.

*The process at the core
of organisational change*

For Miro Foundation, working with the dance artist and hosting him was a challenging and disruptive experience. His approach to space, the collection and the staff generated a new way to experience the museum. A process of re-displaying the collection was one of the main outcomes (an effective output). Furthermore, working with a dance artist made it possible to invest the existing mission and vision of the Foundation with new meaning. It was the catalyst for redesigning the museum experience.

The presence of the dance artist made the need to work more systematically, with new perspectives, more concrete, tangible and visible.

Nottingham-based
Team
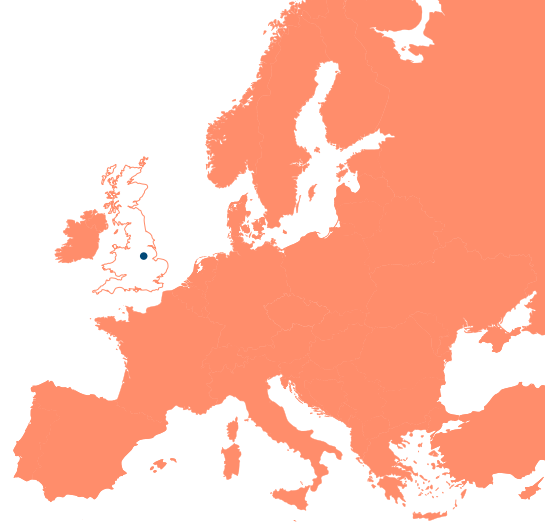
PARTNERSHIP

Nottingham Contemporary
Museum (Associate)

Nottingham Museum Service
Museum (Associate)

Dance4
Dance organisation (Project partner)

Eleanor Sikorski
Dance artist

Organisations took part in DM2 only

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC

Dance-artist-as-curator; figuring things out together; planning organically and in a cross-disciplinary way; negotiating and planning the possibilities; finding connections with urgent and socio-political issues.

Nottingham-based Team
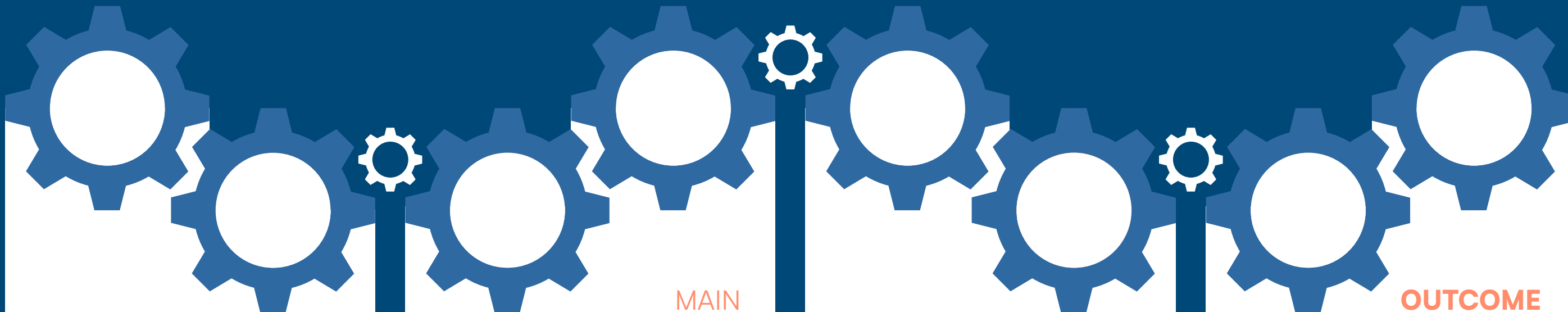
CRUCIAL **INPUTS**

/ access to museum spaces and introducing different professionals to the museums
/ time to reflect, discuss and plan
/ institutional interest and openness towards the research and to trying different ways of working
/ knowledge and creativity of the dance artist
/ honesty and negotiation of feasible activities
/ additional funding to develop residencies and cross-disciplinary activities
/ recycling material from previous exhibitions
/ Using the history of the architecture of a heritage property (Newstead Abbey - under care of Nottingham City Council) to reflect on issues (slavery and colonialism, human rights)

MAIN **ACTIVITIES**

/ promoting the project to both museums, to ensure team members invested in it
/ introducing the dance artist to the museum environment, history, functions, and programmes (tours etc.)
/ facilitating discussion between dance artist and museum staff (curatorial and educational team, operational staff)
/ setting an agenda (dates and themes) for regular meetings to strengthen the local partnership (despite the pandemic)
/ figuring out the possibilities, finding connections between the project and the museums' existing programmes (adapting plan due to Covid-19)
/ intensive planning and organising of residencies
/ circulating information, reporting after each meeting
/ sharing ideas and working together to plan/ organise the seminar, the workshop and partner meetings
/ balance the workflow, looking for continuity
/ getting additional funding to create residencies for other artists, as well as project work (i.e. Producer-led gallery research).

OUTPUT **GENERATED**

/ meetings in person and online
/ "artefacts" for communicating and disseminating the process/project
/ Nottingham audio walk
/ programme of the Nottingham seminar and workshop (which took place entirely online)
/ hosted events for the DM2 partners and for external audiences
/ funding application for additional residencies for artists not involved in DM2 (ReFraming Dance)

OUTCOME GENERATED

/ museums become familiar with other artistic approaches
/ mutual benefit and fruitful relational exchange: what the museum is working on and what the dance artist is working on can overlap
/ rethink the museums' narratives by adopting the dance artist's perspective
/ reinterpret heritage in the light of present-day needs and issues
/ Refresh the way the museums planned their programmes and the stories they communicate
/ fertile ground for new projects (Reframing Dance)
/ collaboration with other local artists/ professionals

The context

Two different organisations (in terms of aims, ambitions, types of activities) were involved in the Nottingham-based partnership: Nottingham Contemporary and Nottingham City Council's Museums & Gallery. The dance artist focused on the following venues: Nottingham Contemporary, Newstead Abbey and Wollaton Hall.

A shared organising role

All three locations are quite distinct from one another and creating logical connections between seemingly disparate sites was a challenge. Despite this, the dance artist established **elements of connection and continuity** between the venues.

It was necessary for the dance artist to infiltrate the different museum environments and systems, and then to adapt her way of exploring and working. New perspectives and contexts for the historical significance of the heritage were activated through a process of re-interpretation and realisation connected to urgent socio-political issues.

The **dance artist curated content** on an equal footing with the museum curator, which required a lot of planning, discussing, and figuring out about what might be possible, in synergy with the staff of the museums.

The regular action-led evaluation process helped the local partnership identify similarities between the dance artist's approach and the interests/ ambitions of the two sites. The subject of colonialism became one of the research paths investigated by the dance artist. A focus on colonialism led to identifying other dance artists who investigated the issue from their perspectives. The starting point was a search for meaning held within the history of Newstead Abbey.

Experiencing enabling conditions

To develop an artist-based process that enables organisational exchange and cross-disciplinary relationships, the coexistence of **time & continuity** is required. They are essential to set a *coherent and common conceptual framework, to reciprocate ambitions, share ideas and develop a common language.*

This requires **managing the time frame of the project**, creating a **flow of continuity**, and facing the discontinuities which are often a characteristic of European projects.

Enough time is required, to:
/ increase the opportunity for the project to have a legacy and to validate the knowledge and experiences generated throughout. This enables the organisations and the dance artist to develop and enhance the skills needed to implement meaningful audience development projects.
/ enable the dance artist to engage with the museums/gallery environments at the beginning of the process - to understand their value system, way of working, timing, roles, and functions, before exploring common ambitions and actions.

The respective parties need to spend time together and get to know each other to build a successful collaboration. This is vital for those who have completely different views and skills.

For various reasons (Covid and institutions that were new to this kind of process) it was not possible to establish a schedule whereby the artist was present in the museum environment. For this reason, a lot of **negotiation**, combined with **adaptability** and **flexibility** became fundamental to activate the process and to generate a different way of communicating and working for everyone involved.

Although they were new to the process and it required a lot of planning and negotiation, neither institution imposed preconceived ideas on the dance artist.

The facilitation-style leadership of the dance organisation

The role that Dance4 staff took is noteworthy: while taking a step back they remained fully engaged. They observed this collaboration and watched this relationship flourish. From the outset they had created the conditions within which collaboration, communication and sharing was made possible. Their existing organisation culture was such that this was a natural way of working for them; one that did not present a challenge.

Rotterdam-*based*
Team
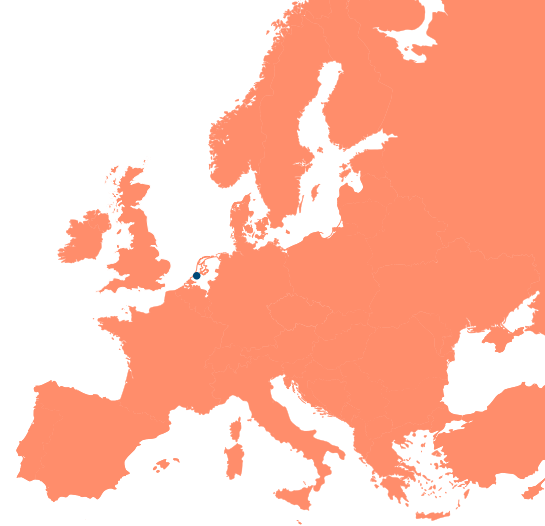
PARTNERSHIP

Boijmans Van Beuningen
Museum (Associate)

Dansateliers
Dance organisation (Project partner)

Ingrid Berger Myhre
Dance artist

Organisations took part in DM1 & DM2 (dance artist was new to project in DM2)
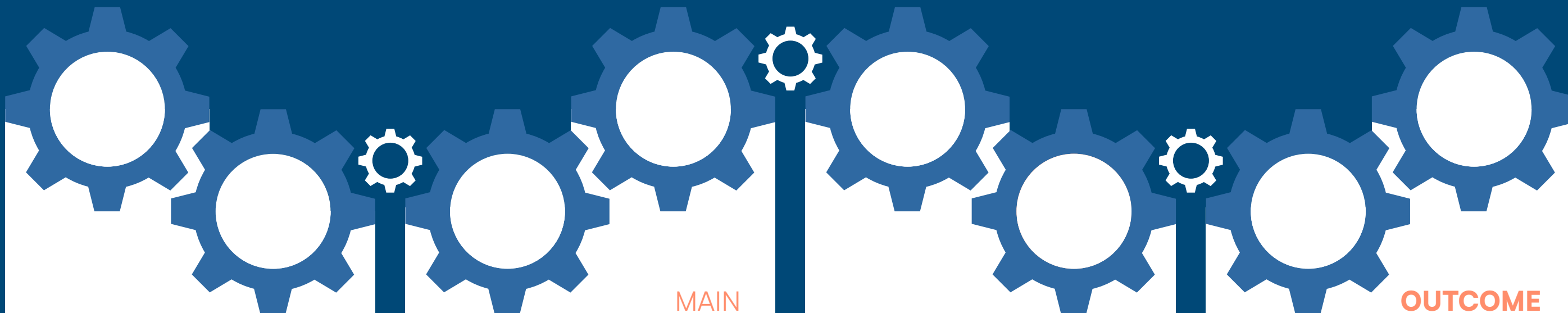
UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC

Negotiation and advocacy for dance, recognising its role and value; institutional trust to engage all staff; the importance of time and ongoing conversations

Rotterdam-based Team

CRUCIAL INPUTS

/ As the Boijmans was being renovated, the dance artist had to work in several museum locations
/ different levels of willingness, engagement, and openness were encountered
/ different levels of accessibility to the museums' spaces and different sensitivities in conceiving the role of the dance artist were encountered
/ experience in DM1 (Boijmans)
/ an empty museum space
/ freedom to define the artistic research
/ dance organisation trusted the project and the dance artist, taking care of the dance artist's needs, support, and connections time and energy
/ a "reflective partner" + technical staff/ tools to support the artist's activity
/ international meetings to understand and align

MAIN ACTIVITIES

/ informing and engaging "neighbouring museums"
/ legitimising the presence, role, and the value of the dance artist in the eyes of the museum staff
/ planning museum tours and residencies
/ getting to know the people working in the museum; exploring, and mapping the museums' value systems
/ exploring staff perception of the museum context, the presence of the dance artist and the potential that dance has as a creative driver
/ setting up a solid and collaborative communication system to promote the project in the local context
/ dealing with organisational issues and struggling against internal resistances in some of the museums (resistance can take different forms from indifference to overcontrol)
/ co-programming/organising the Rotterdam seminar
/ legitimising the artistic research: overcoming the idea of dance as subservient to the artworks, enabling a new reality
/ conversations with other members of the DM2 consortium beyond the local context

OUTPUT GENERATED

/ meetings in person and online
/ interviews with museum staff
/ treasure hunt + public sharing/testing/ public engagement
/ protocol related to the treasure hunt
/ residencies + video documentation and other "artefacts" for communicating and disseminating the process/project
/ programme for the Rotterdam workshop and seminar (which took place entirely online)

OUTCOME GENERATED

/ awareness of what the museum contains beyond the artworks: space, people, stories, relationships, values, behaviours, habits
/ understanding of the museum staff's perception of the museum role, activities, and programmes
/ experience in dealing with museum politics, awareness of the enabling conditions (time, energy, institutional trust, experience, conversations to share the value of the project, engagement)
/ awareness of dance's potential beyond its usual setting and of the dance artist's potential to work in other contexts
/ cross-sectoral and cross-disciplinary team building
/ fertilising the ground in the museum for future radical artistic experiences
/ collaboration with other local artists

The context

The Rotterdam-based team dealt with a **challenging context**: the Boijmans Museum (which took part in DM1 and had already collaborated with the dance organisation) was closed for refurbishment. As a result, the museum was an empty space and the collection was dispersed around the city. Four of the museums displaying part of the Boijmans' collection became venues for the project (Stedelijk Museum Schiedam; Kunsthal Rotterdam; Rotterdam Museum; Maritime Museum).

The dance artist dealt with **varying levels of institutional engagement** and varying perceptions of her role. She experienced **different levels of freedom, openness, and varying attitudes from museum staff members**. These ranged from high expectations and a desire to control what she did to indifference. The Dance Artist detected a shift among museum colleagues who moved from considering her as a visitor to a colleague. In general, the attitude was a reflection of the senior management of the museum in question.

This context has influenced the way the team worked, as well as the entire process (the communication system, the artistic research, the distribution of the leadership).

It would not make sense to attribute a positive or negative value to the different approaches of the museums involved, but it is important to recognise that this experience triggered valuable reflections.

Becoming aware of the enabling conditions to effect a change

Dealing with such a variety of approaches has made it clear that the work going on 'behind the scenes' cannot be underestimated.

This requires:

/ a lot of **time**, **energy** and **care**

/ the creation of a strong **communication system**. An effective communication system impacts the awareness of the potential of artistic research.

/ the development of an ongoing conversation and creation of an environment of institutional **trust** to bring all the partners to an equal level of understanding and engagement of the process and its meaning. This naturally leads to reflecting both on questions of responsibility and leadership:

"at least one who is responsible to take the others (director, curator, guards and the whole team) onboard is needed"

In processes that demand time, energy and care, there is a need to **share the responsibilities**. Collaboration is more complicated. Whilst it is a good idea for one person to take the lead in keeping the project going, the whole working group needs to be aware of the importance of taking **responsibility** and **care**.

"Taking time to allow each one to be part of the experience is fundamental"

To create an open and fruitful environment within which to work safely, **a long-term experience** is needed to break down any internal resistance and fears.

"[...] I had the perception of being part more of the educational department than of the artistic one"

There can be tension between the educational and the artistic departments of a museum. This can be symptomatic of a resistance to change. Involving all the departments of the museum can enhance the vision of the dance artist's role and potential. Sometimes it is necessary to emphasise that **dance is not subservient to the artworks and that it can bring valuable perspectives and create new narratives for the museum**. It can become a way to advocate for dance and to legitimise the sharing of power between the artist, the dance organisation and the museums.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ARTISTIC RESEARCH PROCESS AND THE CONTEXT

The Boijmans museum context (it was closed) and the dance artist's attitude to observe and listen to existing questions in the museum, rather than impose her vision, naturally raised awareness that institutions and buildings contain much more than the artworks. The dance artist observed that she would have paid less attention to the artworks had they all been on display. This changed the research perspective **from looking *at* something to looking *for* something**.

Bonn-based Team

PARTNERSHIP

Bundeskunsthalle: the Bonn team were project partners who did not form a local team with a dance organisation or dance artist.

Team members:
Miriam Barhoum - Program Curator
Jens Bohnsack - Education Department

Organisations took part in DM2 only

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTIC

Artistic research-driven, empowering process; organisational shift; art centre as an open hub
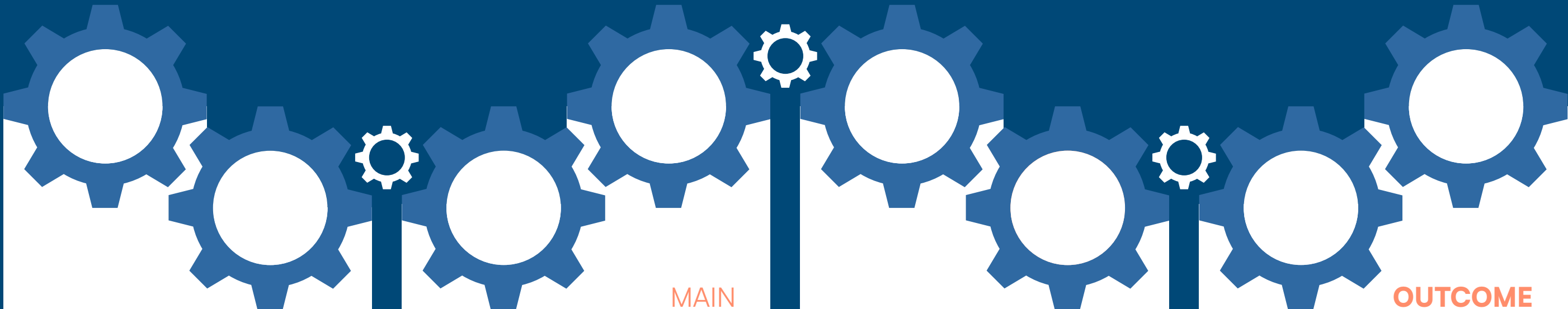
Soziale Plastik

Bonn-based Team

CRUCIAL **INPUTS**

/ previous interest and background in performing arts, familiarity with the language

/ familiarity with performance and moving bodies as an element of an exhibition

/ additional funding was required

/ outputs and learning from all partners - across the project, particularly the dance artists

MAIN **ACTIVITIES**

/ involving local artists who performed and experimented in the exhibition space

/ inviting 2 DM2 dance artists involved in the project to work in their space

/ meeting and sharing with DM2 partners

/ meeting with their Bundeskunsthalle colleagues to explain the project, and share what they had learnt from it

/ understanding that DM2 was not an output-driven project and persuading their colleagues to trust in the process

/ research about new formats and tools (getting inspiration and input from the DM2 dance artists' research)

/ adapting outputs generated by other local teams to the Bonn context (artistic programme and targets with specific needs)

/ co-programming and organising the seminar/partner meeting

/ programming cross-disciplinary workshop aimed to approach dance tools

OUTPUT GENERATED

/ programme of the Bonn Seminar, which did not happen

/ dance workshop with refugees (not funded by DM2)

/ interdisciplinary workshop between choreographers and visual artists who were not involved in DM2

/ an interdisciplinary exhibition inspired by DM2 in 2020

OUTCOME GENERATED

/ a greater understanding of the project and its complexity

/ awareness of the difference between including dance artists in a preconceived format or having them as part of the staff/creators/curators

/ awareness of dance artist's needs and the importance of the dance organisation role

/ awareness of the dance artist's potential in working in museums or other contexts

/ a greater understanding of the process-led approach

/ having space to learn, observe, research and experiment pushed the entire team's openness to innovation.

/ a shift in decision making (less budget and finance-driven)

/ enhancing and strengthening cross-disciplinary teamwork within the organisation

/ willingness, ideas, and knowledge for future cross-disciplinary projects which will bring together expertise from different fields

/ new programme ideas (inspired by DM2 partners and artists)

/ awareness of organisational change process

The value of artist-driven research

"Taking part in DM2 has been like going back to University, such a great opportunity because you can research and it does not have to become a certain project, it does not necessarily have to turn out in a specific tangible output or some product. And exactly when I was able to let that thinking go, there were moments when I was so inspired from a project or research practice by one of the dance artists that I just thought <<oh it would be so nice to be able to transform it into a programme for us>>."

The Bonn team did not form a local team (they were not partnered with a Bonn-based Dance Organisation and Dance Artist. However, the Bundeskunsthalle recognised the potential that taking part in DM2 could have, as professionals and as an art and exhibition hall. This is important evidence to consider as part of the legacy of DM2.

Internal working changes and witnessing outcomes

Bonn represents a different type of case study within DM2. Researchers focused on the organisational working system, and on the exchange between people from the same organisation.
The team worked together intensely and connected their roles: *"We represent different disciplines and so outside of dancing museums we have never been working so closely together as we have since the project started, which is great because it brings together expertise from different fields".*

The experience of the Bundeskunsthalle team reinforces the way in which DM2 was a project intended as a **catalyst for professional and organisational empowerment and change**. Reflecting on the project in terms of evaluation can emphasise those changes.

The importance of endorsement of senior management

Having the endorsement of the director enabled changing the approach and introduced the possibility of embedding different points of view and ways of working. Without involvement at a senior level, engaging and motivating the entire organisation to cooperate organically and systematically would have been difficult. DM2 fostered the organisation's open attitude.

"Of course, Bunderkunstalle has been open from the beginning but DM2, especially because of us talking, meeting, and presenting internally about the project, definitely opened up new conversations, curiosity and understanding in how to have an unusual or different approach".

The importance of the role of the dance organisation

Partnering a dance organisation with a museum was central to DM2, and particularly important for museums that have not had experience of presenting performing arts. Learning the language and understanding the needs of different types of organisations was a key objective of the project. Museums can feel overwhelmed by a project like DM2, because it can be difficult to free up space and resources. **The role of the dance organisation as a mediator and supporter is essential**. As the Bonn team operated without a dance organisation they decided that they would not host a residency and contribute to the project in other ways.

Inviting a dance artist in a preconceived format VS including him/her as part of the staff

"[...]I know it gets to the point that I am very comfortable with this uncertainty and explaining to my colleagues that this research is artist-driven with an uncertain outcome."

Taking on a dance artist as part of the staff required a high degree of openness to innovation and uncertainty. It required a shift in organisational management and decision-making: moving away **from commissioning a dance artist** and **towards being open to what they will develop**. This was an intensive and extensive shift in role and positioning that required dedicated time, resources, competencies, awareness, and expertise. Taking part in projects like DM2 can enable the development of these attitudes and skills.

80

From case study to prototype

Each case study has an exploratory and a definitive purpose, which considers the context, the specificity and nature of the subjects involved and the aesthetic vocation of the artists.

Despite their unique characteristics, case studies have been analysed to draw attention to similarities, to identify the elements that could be transferable and adaptable regardless of original context. Those similarities can be summarised as follows:

/ a **greater understanding of the ways audiences engage with artworks**; the pathway of DM2 showed alternative models of engaging audiences who had different needs, expectations and desires

/ application of **cross-disciplinary practices** to enhance cultural offers

/ an increased **attention to team building, staff empowerment and shared decision-making** processes

/ Moving away from a linear way of working (from idea to solution) towards **working in intermediate steps**, during which the process is constantly shared, questioned, and renegotiated. By focusing on mid-term goals, the teams have been stimulated and have felt engaged

/ an **organisational shift** based on **horizontal leadership** and a **way of working based on a process-based vision**

/ **a solid and collaborative communication system** to promote the project and create an environment of institutional trust both inside the organisation and in the local context

/ **new synergies** with local artists, institutions and organisations

/ **organisational skills, partnership building, and digital engagement** at all levels (personal, professional, organisational)

/ **empowerment of soft skills** such as creative thinking, dealing with complexity, relational attitude, risk-attitude, moving beyond the usual 'comfort zone', acceptance of failure

Additionally:

/ Museums gained a vision of the museum as **a living ecosystem**, embracing the whole staff, the visitors and the material culture and history represented. The museum interacted with other cultural and non-cultural organisations in the service of their community and for a social purpose

/ Dance Organisations enabled collaboration within the local team, supporting the artistic research process without being invasive or output driven but playing a crucial role in enabling effective exchanges.

It was therefore possible to reach conclusions that are versatile and scalable regardless of the characteristics of contexts and contributors who may adopt similar approaches.

The methodology

From a methodological point of view the research team adopted a mix of different tools, based on qualitative research methods, used in the academic fields of cultural and social studies, humanities and the arts and aesthetics-based research.

The research activity balanced active and collaborative problem-solving with data-driven analysis. This was done to better understand causes and effects of change on an individual and organisational level.

The approach has been that of the **Participatory Action Research** (PAR), that allows the researchers to detect holistic characteristics of real-life events in specific contexts and of complex processes involving heterogeneous contributors, producing knowledge with others to reflect and understand practices, contexts and relationships.

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) contributes to the implementation of the project by proposing/returning stimuli and reflections in *itinere* and influence action/change,

and investigating the impact DM2 generated on multiple levels:

/ impact on the artists
/ impact on the dance organisations and their staff
/ impact on the museums and their staff (partners & associates)

Qualitative research focuses mainly on the subjective interpretation of phenomena and not on its quantification. It requires flexibility and an orientation towards process rather than outcome. It is concerned with context—regarding behaviour and situation as inextricably linked in forming experience" (Cassel, Symon, 1994:1-13).

Assessing the impact of a European cooperation project involving multiple and varied organisations requires understanding how change affects contributors in different ways and to evaluate the impact of DM2 on the beneficiaries, the research team adopted the **"Theory of Change" model** (TOC), that is a widespread and consolidated approach in the field of social impact assessment.

Case Study Research

The qualitative approach tries to understand organisational processes, outcomes, and effects to comprehend individual and group experiences. Taking a quantitative approach limits the assessment "that a change has occurred over time but cannot say how (what processes were involved) or why (in terms of circumstances, factors, motivations and stakeholders)" (Cassel, Symon,1994:1-13).

With this in mind, **case studies** from each local group have been analysed and, according to this approach, the research combines the following qualitative methods: participant observation, in depth interviews, informal conversations/feedback and focus groups. Methodologically it has been crucial to consider the longitudinal and temporal development of the project, aligned with an approach known as **before-and-after study (also called pre-post study)**. This type of study measures outcomes in a group of participants before being exposed to an intervention or involved in a project, and then again afterwards.

To understand the impact of a European project involving different countries and cultural backgrounds, the **context** is central to the interpretation and analysis of the phenomena. To capture this, after the first exploratory phase, the research focused on the analysis of individual case studies (7 local teams, respectively based in Bassano del Grappa, Vitry-sur-Seine, Prague, Barcelona, Nottingham, Rotterdam and the exceptional case of Bonn) characterised by contextual differences in economic, social and artistic terms. Researchers sought to link the evidence from specific contexts and draw overall conclusions.

"The key feature of the case study approach is not method or data but the emphasis on understanding processes as they occur in their context" (HARTLEY, 1994, p.227, 2004, p.332). Therefore, research questions about "how" and "why" rather than "what" or "how much" are best suited to the case study strategy (ibid.).

Furthermore, according to Yin the use of multiple sources of evidence in **case study data collection** allows the researchers to address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioural issues (Yin, 2003a: pp. 97-98).

This multi-perspective approach is useful to arrive at a holistic and comprehensive analysis of the multi-layered effects of the project and aids the understanding of complex processes that aim to generate artistic findings and social effects.

Early on in DM2, the research followed a **sectoral analysis of the ambitions** related to the project. This considered the three main contributing groups as different units of analysis: museums, dance organisations and dance artists. The shift to the case study approach, which focused on the local team conceived as a multi stakeholder living and ecosystemic unit of analysis (dance artist, museum, and dance organisation together), represents the natural reaction and adaptation to the evolution of the project.

In year 2 of DM2, the relationship, and exchanges between the members of the local team intensified and this benefitted the design and implementation of the project. Local teams started to share common vision and goals, enabling a process of collective research that freed up space for experimentation and innovation.

The Theory of Change model

A DEFINITION OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE

At the core of this approach there is *<<essentially a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It is focused on mapping out or "filling in" what has been described as the "missing middle" between what a program or change initiative does (its concrete activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved. It practically does this by first identifying the desired long-term goals and then works back from these to identify all the conditions (outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs) that must be in place (and how these relate to one another causally) for the goals to occur. These are all mapped out in an Outcomes Framework.*

The Outcomes Framework then provides the basis for identifying what type of activity or intervention will lead to the outcomes identified as preconditions for achieving the long-term goal. Through this approach, the precise link between activities and the achievement of the long-term goals are more fully understood>> [11]

THE DESIGN VALUE OF EVALUATION

According to this approach, the impact evaluation is no longer perceived as an activity separate from the project activities or temporally detached from it (generally coming at the end). Rather, it is a process fully integrated into the project, from inception to conclusion. Although this approach expresses its full potential when applied from the earliest conceptual and design stage of the project, it can be also applied for end-of-project evaluation purposes.

However, if adopted as early as possible, it can support a more effective and clear set up of internal logic of the project activities. It naturally prompts a checking of assumptions and beliefs that motivate the activities, and that sometimes might inadvertently contribute to failure. Therefore, this approach enriches the traditional planning tools.
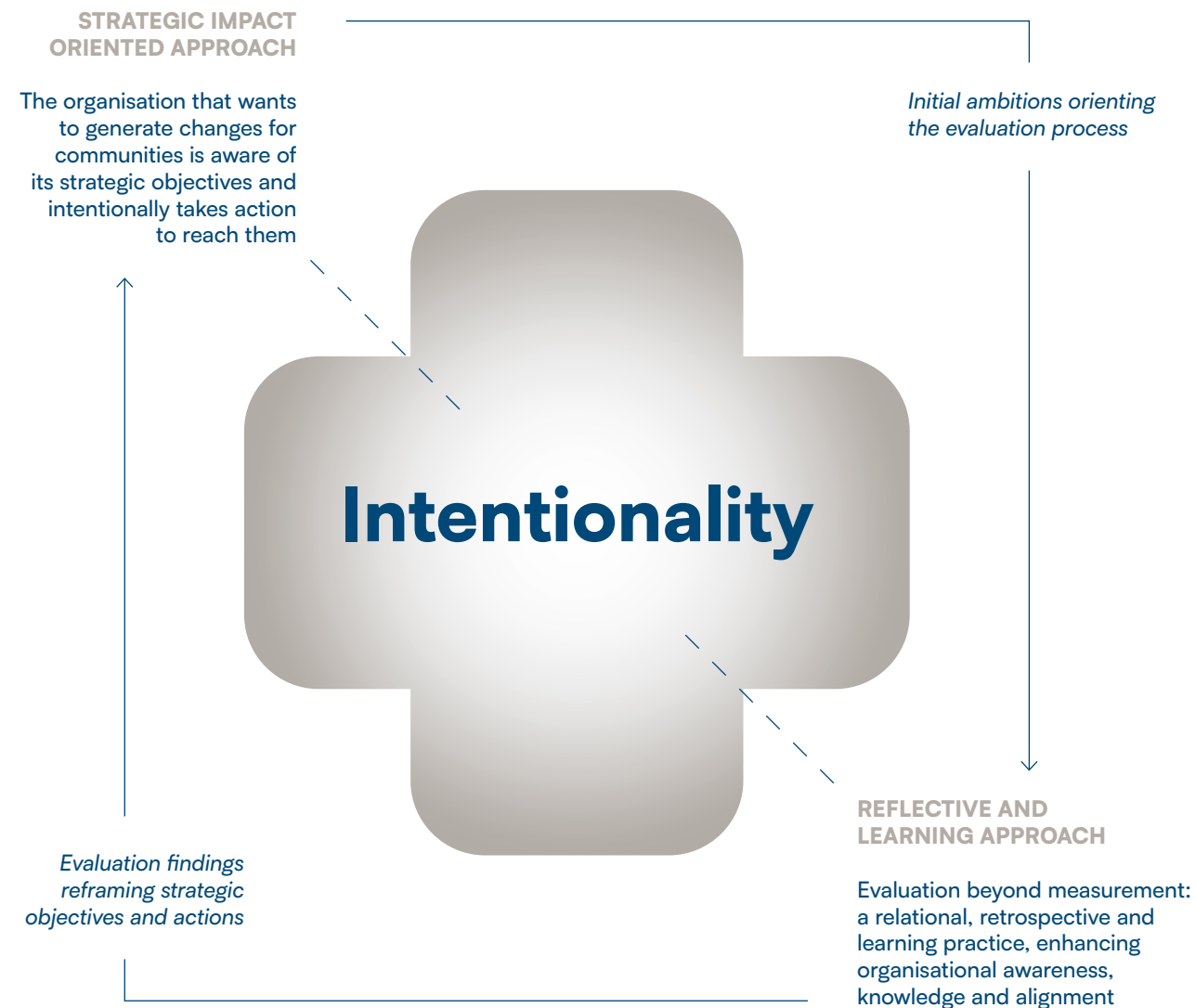
TOC is a useful approach for re-orienting action in moments of great crisis and uncertainty. When rethinking and re-planning is required, TOC is a helpful reminder to go back to the desired goal.

TOC REQUIREMENTS (OR PRE-CONDITIONS)

Applying the TOC approach to the cultural and artistic sectors requires several pre-conditions:

1) to legitimise activities that might be assessed not only for their artistic quality and creative process, but also for the "**short, medium and long-term effects on the community of reference and with respect to the identified goals**"[12];

2) to become familiar with a **logic of consequentiality highlighting the cause-effect links**, which at first glance might be perceived as rigid and distant from the complexity of the daily reality that cultural organisations usually reacts and responds to;

3) an **awareness** of how actions and initiatives affect the desired impacts. This should also lead to the development of an *evaluation mindset*, in other words, a natural interest in checking out what outcomes and impacts (changes) an initiative has generated, as well as understanding why and how, to activate an internal learning process as well as to be able to communicate it.

[11] https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/

[12] Guidelines for the implementation of the social impact evaluation system referring to the activities carried out by the Italian Third Sector's organisations, Italy, July 2019

STRATEGIC IMPACT
ORIENTED APPROACH

The organisation that wants
to generate changes for
communities is aware of
its strategic objectives and
intentionally takes action
to reach them

*Initial ambitions orienting
the evaluation process*

Intentionality

*Evaluation findings
reframing strategic
objectives and actions*

REFLECTIVE AND
LEARNING APPROACH

Evaluation beyond measurement:
a relational, retrospective and
learning practice, enhancing
organisational awareness,
knowledge and alignment

Picture 1
At the core of an impact oriented approach

A GREAT CHALLENGE: APPLYING THE TOC AT AN ULTRA-ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL

Ultra-organisational level refers to the application of the TOC to partnerships that are built ad hoc to follow up on a project or in the context of thematic or sectoral networks. This is one of the most recent applications of the TOC, mainly spread in the UK, and it brings both challenges and opportunities.

It helps to consolidate a partnership and to stimulate a cooperative approach. Indeed, not sharing one's own characteristics (what each one is able to do or generally used to do) but **encouraging to share common and long-term vision** and goals, **facilitates the identification of collective strategies and members' resources to contribute to the common vision**. For this reason, it has been essential for the researchers to support all the participants in DM2 to first of all highlight and set shared and common ambitions or desired impacts (see chapter 1).

Partnerships are generally complex systems in terms of size and number of players, geographical locations, values, perspectives, ambitions, areas of expertise, interests, attitudes, ways of working, languages and, above all, relationships. As these systems are comparable to living organisms that act internally and relate to the external context, they are characterised by a strong propensity for internal change. Applying the TOC at this level means constantly monitoring its evolution and, if needed, making changes to adopt the original approach to the actual context of application.

A PROCESS TO FOLLOW

The TOC proposes a process to be followed, originally articulated in 5 consequential steps that the research team have reframed as follows:

1) Identify the project's long-term change objectives and impact vision (in form of **shared ambitions**)

2) Map the project's beneficiaries and identify the key ones (from the sectoral perspective -dance artists, dance organisations and museums- to **the local teams**)

3) Retrospectively identify, and then reciprocally link, the enabling conditions, requirements and steps needed to achieve the desired changes for the beneficiaries (**expected value chain - both sectoral and local teams**)

4) Identify and build indicators to evaluate outputs, outcomes and impacts, to continuously assess the progress of the project and related actions

5) Construct a narrative that describes the logical steps that have occurred (**the final local teams' value chain**) and the values behind the process, in order to illustrate why and how the change occurred (**the report**)

Among the operational tools that the TOC provides, the most used by the researchers for DM2 have been: the *impact* vision in the form of main ambitions (see chapter 1) and the Value Chains (see chapter 2).

WHAT IS IMPACT?

To approach an impact assessment, it is necessary to clarify what is meant by impact. The term *impact* has many different uses; it can be applied to different disciplinary fields (environmental, economic, social, and cultural). Moreover, it is possible to distinguish between negative and positive, direct, and indirect, voluntary, and involuntary impacts.

Other factors can influence the choice of one impact assessment approach over another, namely: available time, economic resources at disposal and evaluation related goals, values and priorities, competencies, and internal sustainability. Other dimensions of impact that have to be considered are economic, environmental, social, cultural,... (Cicerchia, 2021, pp. 27-39).

The most widespread definition of impact within the nonprofit sector, where organisations are increasingly called upon to assess the impacts generated, currently focus on the social dimension:
<<effects and changes (in terms of knowledge, attitudes, status, living conditions, values...) generated in the long term in the community by the activities carried out by an organisation (or project, intervention, initiatives). Moreover, the impact is the portion of the total outcome that has occurred as a direct result of the intervention, as opposed to the portion that would have anyway occurred also without the intervention[13]>>.

This definition implies the necessity to adopt counterfactual methods to effectively assess the impact and be able to recognise the *deadweight* (the portion of the impact that would have occurred anyway, without the intervention), ensure the *attribution* (the portion of impact actually caused by the intervention considered and not by other factors) and the *measurability*.

However, counterfactual methods are often out of reach for most of the organisations and projects within which they are involved, for several reasons but mainly: <u>economic</u> - the budget allocated to the evaluation generally is insufficient to support the expenses related to impact analysis and the costs for engaging experts with appropriate skills, and also <u>temporal</u> because impact is generally more visible longer term (10 years or more) and this extends beyond the timeframe of most partnership projects, including EU projects.

As a consequence, there is some confusion in the field of impact assessment, because many people continue to require or talk about impact evaluation when in reality this is not possible if understood in a scientific way. Evaluating and measuring the short and medium-term outcomes is more common.
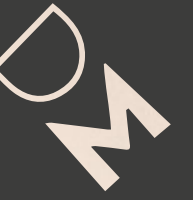
[13] Ricciuti E, Cottino Social Impact Campus, University Course of Professional Update in Social Impact Assessment, February 8, 2021

THE EVALUATION OUTPUTS

Therefore, in light of the considerations shared thus far, it seems appropriate to clarify what are the main final outputs of the research team in terms of impact assessment:

1) **the 7 local teams' value chains and their unique characteristics**: these report and evidence outputs and outcomes (understood as short and medium-term effects) generated by each local team, and also the entire process leading to their achievement, explaining the inputs introduced into the process and the activities carried out to contribute to generating the effects shown. The reality of each local team was also deepened through the narration of some aspects that could not be reported in a schematic way within the value chain. The value chains are the concrete results of a longer, deeper, and more complex implementation process of the main steps proposed by the TOC approach.

2) **a collection of living recommendations**: this has been conceived with the aim to build a bridge between past and future, a tool (for some aspects very operational) that gathers all the learning from a 3-year-long project so that it can contribute to future developments. Here it is possible to find references on enabling conditions, common elements, and thematic focus, which resonate with the reflective and learning dimension of evaluation. It has been conceived as interactive tools for anyone who wants to engage with and understand DM2.

Annexes

THE MENTOR AND THE FACILITATOR	«DANCE» PROJECT PARTNERS	MUSEUMS	ARTISTS
Betsy Gregory	**Project Managers**	**Directors | Curators**	**Artists**
	Entry quantitative data collection December 2018—February 2019	**Entry quantitative data collection** December 2018—February 2019	
Entry in-depth interviews December 2018	**Entry in-depth interviews** February—April 2019	**Entry in-depth interviews** February—April 2019	**Entry in-depth interviews + focus group** Seminar 1, May 2019
Ongoing monitorings during the partecipants' meetings 6 times: August 2019, December 2019, March 2020, June 2020, November 2020, March 2021	**Ongoing monitorings during the partecipants' meetings** 6 times: August 2019, December 2019, March 2020, June 2020, November 2020, March 2021	**Ongoing monitorings during the partecipants' meetings** 6 times: August 2019, December 2019, March 2020, June 2020, November 2020, March 2021	**Ongoing monitoring: focus group | collective interviews during the workshops and seminars** 6 times: August 2019, December 2019, March 2020, June 2020, November 2020, March 2021
	Final quantitative data collection January—June 2021	**Final quantitative data collection** January—June 2021	
Final in-depth interviews May 2021	**Final in-depth interviews** May—July 2021	**Final in-depth interviews** May—July 2021	**Final in-depth interviews** Workshop 6, May 2021

Gill Hart	**Operative Organisations' staff**	**Project Manager | Operative Organisations' staff**	
Entry in-depth interview December 2018	**Entry Interviews** May 2019: after Seminar 1, before Residency 1	**Entry Interviews** May 2019: after Seminar 1, before Residency 1	
Ongoing monitorings during Seminar 2 March 2020	**Ongoing monitoring: short interviews (by skype) after the first 4 residencies** 4 times: June 2019, September 2019, February 2020, October 2020	**Ongoing monitoring: short interviews (by skype) after the first 4 residencies** 4 times: June 2019, September 2019, February 2020, October 2020	**Ongoing monitoring: interviews at the end of each residency** 5 times: June 2019, September 2019, February 2020, October 2020, April 2021
Final interviews during Seminar 3 May 2021	**Final interviews** After Residency 5, April 2021	**Final interviews** After Residency 5, April 2021	

The reframed research plan

THE MENTOR AND THE ADVISOR	«DANCE» PROJECT PARTNERS	MUSEUMS	ARTISTS
Betsy Gregory & Gill Hart	**Project Managers**	**Directors	Curators**	**Artists**
	Entry quantitative data collection May—July 2019	**Entry quantitative data collection** May—July 2019	
Entry in-depth interviews March 2019	**Entry in-depth interviews** February 2019—February 2020	**Entry in-depth interviews** February 2019—February 2020	**Entry in-depth interviews + 1 collective interviews** July—August 2019
	Focus group: sharing abitions May 2019		
	Presentation, validation and feedback of the first output produced by the research December 2019		
	Dedicated sectoral online focus group at the beginning of the pandemic March 2020	**Dedicated sectoral online meetings during the pandemic** March—September 2020	**Ongoing monitoring—observation** November 2019, February 2020, March 2020, July 2020
Active engagement in conceiving the evaluation approach and designing the value chains September 2020—February 2021			
	Final in-depth collective interviews (focus group), as a local team January—February 2021		
	Validation of the local teams' value chains, as a local team May 2021		

Annexes

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