

REPORT

(by Antonio Pinto Ribeiro)

**Meeting: “Building partnership and alliances among civil society,
public authorities and cultural organizations”**

Rio de Janeiro, Monday, 27th November, 2006

Chairpersons: Ugo Bacchella, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo and Dietar Jaenicke, Forum Cultural Mundial

Participants:

Dietar Jaenicke – Fórum Cultural Mundial 2006

Ugo Bacchella – Fondazione Fitzcarraldo

Patricia Kistenmacher – Avina Foundation, Buenos Aires

Hugo Barreto – Roberto Marinho Foundation and

GIFE Grupo de Institutos, Fundações e Empresas, Brasil

Katalin E.Koncz and Andrea Csanadi, Open Society Institute, Budapest

Ivan May, Business & Arts South Africa (BASA)

Kathinka Dittrich van Weringh – European Cultural Foundation

Maria Conti – Pro Helvetia, Swiss Arts Council

António Pinto Ribeiro - Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisboa

Main Topics:

“Building partnership and alliances among civil society, public authorities and cultural organizations”

- *What obstacles do foundations encounter in managing and evaluating their programmes and projects?*
- *What factors could encourage / facilitate foundations in embarking medium long term partnerships and alliances with public agencies as well as transnational cultural networks?*
- *How can foundations pursue their own agenda and thus preserve their own autonomy and identity?*

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Opening and welcome by **Dietar Jaenicke**, expressing the desire that the meeting will enable the attending Foundations together with other Organizations, to create a “thinkthank”.

Ugo Bacchella, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo:

presented the above mentioned issues and questions of the session and focused on the last one: How foundations can pursue their own agenda and thus preserve their own autonomy and identity.

The topic was most thoroughly discussed by **Patricia Kistenmacher, Avina Foundation**. Patricia presented focused on the existing tension between preserving identities and willing to collaborate. Patricia affirmed that the tensions are different depending on the policy, and stressed the importance of creating confidence which means taking the risk.

Hugo Barreto, Roberto Marinho Foundation and GIFE, Grupo de Institutos, Fundações e Empresas,

Hugo Barreto, on the basis of his experience at the Roberto Marinho Foundation, listed several obstacles to the foundation’s work. Among them:

- the third work sector in Brazil is ill structured
- laws and regulations are old fashioned
- lack of professionals with quality within the services.

In Hugo’s point of view it is important to make an evaluation of the situation in order to adapt foundations’ methods to their goals. On the other hand, Hugo referred that, in Brazil the existing discrepancy, between high technology and extreme poverty is a serious problem that, in the nineties, was one of the main reasons for foundations’ slow development.

Katalin E.Koncz, (Open Society Institute):

Katalin highlighted the need to deal with the imperfections of “new” foundations and with the existing differences between foundations. Katalin insisted on the fact that it is needed to find a path that solves the existing problems. In Katalin’s opinion the main problem arises when a group gets hold of power and in 2 or 3 years transforms itself into a closed elite. The question is: “how can we predict this?”

Other questions posed:

How should we deal with local objectives and global aims?

For how long and in what conditions should support be given to groups or organizations?

How should the limits of grant giving be defined as well as the limits of decision makers?

António Pinto Ribeiro from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation:

António questioned if foundations' decision makers, including himself, are prepared to be replaced? António affirmed that "the loss of democracy within foundations occurs with the passage of time" and questioned: "what are the best assets in a foundation? How do we assess ourselves?"

Hugo Barreto -GIFE Grupo de Institutos, Fundações e Empresas,

Hugo intervened to ask "how should the circle of vices within foundations be terminated?", and affirmed the necessity to set some of criteria that guarantee quality.

Patricia Kistenmacher (Avina Foundation) pinpointed the problems related with long term measures, short-term measures, budgets, and the need for clarification of proposals before financial support is given. Patricia also focused on the need to clarify the relation between foundations' goals and their mission.

Ivan May, (Business & Arts South Africa) underlined the need to find a methodology of evaluation based on a rating system that enables to reduce the gap of information between the funders and the art organizations seeking for grants.

The rating should be made by independent organs and should consider both organisations and their projects and in particular their capacities in terms of financial control. The artistic side should not be considered in such evaluation. An auditing process would also be needed.

A rating model developed by Empowerdex Civil Society has been developed in South Africa for evaluating civil society organizations and projects.

Ugo Bacchella (Fondazione Fitzcarraldo) finally mentioned that IETM and Fitzcarraldo Foundation are currently developing a study proposal on how evaluate transnational cultural networks together with Hivos.

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