

Foundations and Networks International Workshop

Torino, Italy, 16th and 17th November, 2007

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Reports by Diane Dodd, Isabelle Schwarz, Joanneke Lootsma; Mary Ann DeVlieg, Allison Reaves

I. Introduction

On 16th and 17th November 2007 33 representatives of foundations and networks met in Torino, Italy on occasion of the second Foundations and Networks International Workshop.

The workshop is an informal and frank space of debate among foundations active/interested in trans-national cultural cooperation and cultural network representatives.

The edition 2007 was hosted by Compagnia di San Paolo and Fondazione CRT and with the special contribution of IFACCA (International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies).

This workshop followed the first Foundations & Networks International Workshop held on 27th November, 2006 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as parallel event of the Forum Cultural Mundial 2006.

The Torino workshop was attended by:

Serhan Ada, Director Santralistanbul, Turkey

Ugo Bacchella, President Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, Italy

Isabelle Bosman, Expert of cultural networking, Belgium

Stefania Coni, Grant Allocation Support Fondazione CRT, Italy

Sandrine Crisostomo, Red Arte y Transformation Social, Chile

Andrea Csanadi, Senior Program Manager Arts and Culture Network Program, Open Society Institute, Hungary

Ornella D'Agostino, Mediterranean Dance Network, Italy

Luca Dal Pozzolo, Vice President Fondazione Fitzcarraldo/Cultural Observatory of Piedmont, Italy

Nicola Danby, Chief Executive BASA - Business and Arts South Africa South Africa

Mary Ann De Vlieg, Secretary general IETM - International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts, Belgium

Carla Delfos, Executive director ELIA - The European League of Institutes of the Arts, The Netherlands

Dario Disegni, Director Cultural Programme Compagnia di San Paolo, Italy

Diane Dodd, European liaison officer IFACCA - International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, Australia/Europe

Laura Fornara, Assistant Cultural and International Programme Compagnia di San Paolo, Italy

Dieter Jaenicke, Executive director Forum Cultural Mundial, Brazil

Patricia Kistenmacher, Latin American Culture and Sports for Social Transformation Coordinator Avina Foundation, Argentina

Dragan Klaic, Cultural policy analyst, The Netherlands

Nevenka Koprivsek, Founder BUNKER Productions, Slovenia

Josephine Leclercq, Assistant Project Coordinator NEF - Network of Foundations for Innovative Cooperation, Belgium

Joanneke Lootsma, Deputy Director Felix Meritis Foundation, The Netherlands

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Ivan May, Director Vodacom Foundation, South Africa and Vice Chairman BASA - Business and Arts South Africa, South Africa
Natacha Melo, Coordinator Red Sudamericana de danza, Uruguay
Gilli Mendel, Director of film and media education and special project Van Leer Group Foundation/Jerusalem Film Institute, Israel/The Netherlands
Angelo Miglietta, General Secretary Fondazione CRT, Italy
MagdaLena Moreno, Manager South Project- artists network, Australia
Antonio Pinto Ribeiro, Chief Curator Gulbenkian Foundation, Portugal
Allison Reaves, Internee Master dei Talenti/Fondazione CRT, USA
Oumar Sall, Coordinator Groupe 30 Afrique- Interafrican Network of Cultural Exchange, Senegal
Isabelle Schwarz, Head of Cultural Policy Development European Cultural Foundation, The Netherlands
Alessandro Stillo, Director BJCEM - Biennial of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, Italy
Alvin Tan, The Necessary Stage, Singapore
Paul Van Paaschen, Arts and Culture programme officer Hivos, The Netherlands
Gottfried Wagner, Director European Cultural Foundation, The Netherlands

The workshop was also led by two experts in evaluation

Annabel Jackson, Annabel Jackson Associates Evaluators, UK
Judith Neisse, MEDIANA, Belgium

Apologize

Hugo Barreto, Secretary general Roberto Marinho Foundation, Brazil
Roberto Caracuta, Director Fondazione Rico Semeraro Italy
Florence Castera, Departement culture, education, environment Fondation de France, France
Gertrud Flengte, Arts and Culture programme officer DOEN Foundation, The Netherlands
Sarah Gardner, Executive Director, - International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, Australia/Europe
Peter Inkei, Treasurer CIRCLE
Marcos Candido, Red Arte y Transformation Social
Jayendran Pather, PANSAs - Performing Arts Network of South Africa
Margaret Shiu, Resartis Intra Asia
Tang Fu Kuen, SAMEO - SPAFA
Steven Richardson, Mobile States, Australia
Claudia Fontes, TRAMA
Anoli Perrera, Theertha
Ade Darmawan, Ruangrupa
Pooja Sood, SANA; NIFCA
Birgitta Persson, Trans Europe Hall
Levan Khetaguri and **Iuri Mgebrishvili**, Caucasian Arts Managers Network
Mark Deputter and Malek Sebai, DBM - Dans Bassin Méditerrané
Veronika Nassalkaya, Central Asia Network for Arts and Culture / ART & SHOCK

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II. Trends and Actors of Transnational Cultural Cooperation

Speech by Dragan Klaić
Friday 16th November 2007

International cultural contacts and cooperation have profited immensely from the digital revolution, the end of the Cold War and the advancing European integration. There is an explosive growth of ideas, concepts and aspirations among cultural operators, projects of increased sophistication and complexity solicit public and private support and - if realized - contribute to the emergence of an integrated European cultural realm. A growing web of intellectual and cultural ties, a capital of cooperative experiences builds on the traditions as old as the Renaissance, but is often forced into anachronistic moulds of the national prestige, packaged for export and representation or is appreciated for its economic potential only. Bilateral and multilateral cooperative initiatives benefit the culture professionals, their organizations and the public; they outlining productive strategies of resistance to the levelling, uniforming impact of the economic globalization. Even with considerable growth of ambitious initiatives and complex projects international networks continue to provide the rudimentary infrastructure of international cultural cooperation and that their value could be measured by their inclusiveness and capacity to spin off new subnetworks and project consortia.

Following Klaić's discourse the conference was opened for dialogue among those present. Alvin Tan, Patricia Kistenmacher and Natacha Melo, Magdalena Moreno presented their approach to networking in the daily work in Singapore, Latina America and Australia:

What's the Future like for Transnational Cultural Cooperation and Networking?

- It was stressed that creating transnational relationships (especially within art for social transformation) is central to strengthening the work of the networks.
- Foundations and private sector can play an important role in this direction (as they have already been doing in Europe, but not in other parts of the world)
- Cooperation between foundations is though difficult in some cases.
- Networks need to facilitate consortium-building. Foundations have a very important role in this direction, especially with other major components of society.
- The self-referential attitude which has prevailed among most networks should be overcome. It is time to try and build bridges with the social realities. Putting together arts programming with the community's and your territory's concerns is important because it can be a way to overcome the economic argument to support the arts. It must be although clear that artists can not become social workers.

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- Networks and foundations should establish a relationship – not just reporting, but move towards dialogue and listening.
- Foundations and governments should work together rather than create their own initiatives.
- Foundations must acknowledge that creative risk is healthy and fluidity must be a part of the project to allow that risk to happen.
- Core funding should be balanced with foundation funding. Core support for networks is integral, but it should be balanced with project funding.
- Some common features should be identified among networks, which are now very different (composition, self-definition, ethos, etc.), starting from the evaluation of their role, their definition, and their significance.

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III. Evaluating networks: what and how?

Workshop led by Judith Neisse
Saturday 17th November 2007

Judith Neisse began the session by announcing an assumption that needed to be validated:

Cultural networks can not be judged like a cultural project

To validate this assumption she proposed to start from defining the difference between a cultural network and a cultural project. The participants worked in two groups: one on 10 characteristics of cultural networks, while the other on 10 characteristics of cultural projects.

The main differences were identified:

PROJECTS	NETWORKS
Are time defined	Are no defined time limit
Are goal orientated	Are not product focussed
partner linkages are more defined (which makes a project fragile i.e. when one partner leaves)	Are open ended membership
are managed	Have more open co-ordination based on democratic principles
are about a thing	are about people and process
	are a catalyst for projects

However, both networks and projects provide a legacy.

Judith Neisse asked the groups to analyse what should be evaluated, according to the characteristics given and asked to give a heading to their evaluation criteria.

The usual criteria for evaluating projects and networks would be 1. pertinence, 2. effectiveness, 3. efficiency, 4. impact and 5. sustainability.

The criteria proposed by the groups are:

1. MUTUAL ENRICHMENT

- ✓ Sharing knowledge and stories. In what way you bring back what you have learned to
 - colleagues
 - peers
 - territory

How does the participation in networks enrich its members, contribute to qualitative change, enhance learning and partnership-building, provide access and visibility? Cross-reference between clusters of

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evaluation criteria (eg. Input-output; learning-empowerment) is needed to evaluate a project in its full remit.

Transformation/qualitative change: evidence of implementation of good practice (see above).

- ✓ Diversity = diverse diversity in
 - content
 - member profile
 - composition
 - decision making process

- ✓ Accessibility
 - governance
 - membership
 - transparency
 - diffusion of info and content to non members

2. SUSTAINABILITY

- ✓ to create new parameters (content and objectives to be shared with foundations)
 - meeting the social needs: providing what is lacking
 - diversity of participating : actors from different fields and disciplines
 - inclusiveness: education and awareness building

How are responsibilities regarding project viability and sustainability shared between the funded and the funding organizations? Partnerships between foundations and networks give other value to projects and programmes and should result in new parameters of evaluation.

3. APPROACH

- ✓ vision and trust
- ✓ input/output
- ✓ composition
- ✓ level of activities (organisation)
- ✓ range of participation

How do networks reach out and identify partners and leaders? Self-evaluation is as much important as evaluation throughout the project cycle. The vision of a network is a key factor for supporting institutions and the approach it takes in carrying societal goals further.

Evaluation often focuses on very concrete outputs and measurable outcomes while both foundations and networks recognize the need to consider also the **projects transformative power and ability of qualitative change in their evaluation processes.**

At the end, **six qualitative criteria** were proposed as possible new entries for NETWORK evaluation processes:

- Excellence and legacy

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- Knowledge-based approach (research, training, information/communication) and innovation
- Collaborative environment (complementarity, solidarity, equity of members and partners)
- Catalyst role (advocacy, impact on other sectors) and multiplier approach
- Exemplary accountability
- Sustainability

Foundations and Networks have a shared interest in learning about and from each other, in sharing cases of successful collaboration between them. Knowing and understanding each other better, can serve the design of concerted strategies to attain common societal goals. The workshop was exemplary in developing a new form of governance, based on transparency and accessibility, that one participant qualified as “enlightened democracy”.

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IV. Evaluating transnational cultural programmes and projects: approaches, goals, and methodologies.

Workshop led by Annabel Jackson
Saturday 17th November 2007

Foundations were consensual that evaluation is first and foremost a way of learning, rather than a control mechanism. Hence, the workshop discussed how to position evaluation in a learning organization. Dedication and interest in evaluation as a learning tool are vital for evaluation processes to bear fruit. Conceptualization (purpose) ranks first, methodology only follows secondly. Evaluation (grantees, programmes, organizations) is about:

- Clarification
- Learning (internal and external)
- Policy development
- Accountability (facts and figures)
- Strategic planning

Evaluation encompasses four elements:

- Conceptualization
- Method / Measurement
- People
- Action

Evaluation does not work if there is no conceptual framework, budget, time, and people for it. And it does not work if it is not visible and not linked to specific responsibilities. Also, it needs to be part of the entire project/programme cycle and be integrated up-front (usually it is carried out at the end of the cycle only).

One of the gifts of evaluation is "evaluative thinking" as Annabel Jackson put it, and therefore time for reflection is the most important prerequisite for evaluations to be carried out successfully. Evaluation can fail either because of failure of conceptualization or failure of implementation.

The perceptual character of evaluation must not be neglected in any evaluation process (cannot be purely rational but also depends on personal, human perceptions). Evaluation in the arts and culture is particularly challenging as it is about evaluation effects and impact in our sub-consciousness.

Based on the theory of change, the **logic model** (assumptions-resources-activities-outputs-outcomes-impact) was used for evaluating the idea that the participating foundations and networks would grow into a network. What are the assumptions and would be the possible outputs, outcomes and impact of such a network?

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Assumptions:

✓ mutual benefit	✓ continuity of participation	✓ namely not a network but a meeting
✓ value of contributions	✓ shared understanding what the group is	✓ an "open space under construction"

Outputs:

✓ test bed for pilot projects	✓ agreed list of priorities for reflection and action	✓ list of potential collaboration partners
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Outcomes:

✓ increased understanding of transnational cultural cooperation	✓ relationship-building	✓ sustainability
✓ changing mentalities, patterns and practices	✓ improved governance	✓ better tuning between networks and foundations

Impact:

- ✓ societal change,
- ✓ e.g. more democratic and integrated societies
- ✓ redefinition of cultural policies in the participating countries influence on foundations that are not yet involved in culture (get them involved in transnational cooperation).

Foundations and Networks should agree on common principles and a common conceptual structure on evaluation.

This should reflect a learning purpose and a strategic relationship and should include:

- ✓ an **understanding of the variations of networks** (a classification)
- ✓ some **shared outcomes**
- ✓ an **understanding of the context** (a classification)
- ✓ it is likely that **methods and questionnaires** will **vary to match specific networks projects**
- ✓ the **values**, e.g. trust (taking account of limitations of working in some environment, e.g. corruption)
- ✓ a commitment to achieving more in the future: **increasing effectiveness**
- ✓ clarify the position: **assessment** (decision on individual grants) + **evaluation** (decisions on the general programme)
- ✓ evaluation should talk about **obstacles and learning – in the middle and at the end** of the project
- ✓ evaluation should include **the most difficult circumstances** (e.g. risky, innovative, evolving processes)
- ✓ take account of **wider view of foundations role**: money but also relationships, knowledge
- ✓ evaluation should take account of **different reporting requirements of foundations** (e.g. venture philanthropy)
- ✓ evaluation must include the **documentation of organisational learning** so that lessons are not lost
- ✓ evaluation should include **organisational/projects report** – a central website or a place to source them.

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V. The question of evaluation: the two perspectives. Needs and expectations and next steps

Saturday 17th November 2007

Both the presentations of the previous workshops show the value of the evaluation.

In any case both the groups agree that they have a shared agenda of learning & improving, and that the evaluation method can serve as a strategic instrument (not so much of control).

Networks feel that they are more about the process, which admittedly is more difficult to measure, and that they have a certain open endedness. A lot of research has already been done on the measuring the long term impact of networks (social cohesion, support of democracy etc) so these are facts that can be build upon.

For foundations - who are naturally inclined to appreciate governance and management issues - it is a written rule that they do not support the running costs of the networks, but that they do support projects.

So it is important to define roughly where foundations and networks are going and what their common strategic objectives can be. This could also be a discussion within the various networks.

Both parties work in an open space with a focus on international cultural co-operation but in different political systems and (policy) programmes.

It is not easy to define this synergy between foundations and networks in this fragmented open space where each foundation/network/project have different role to play and where new players and voices from other sectors easily will come to surface. Foundations tend to have a mission beyond the money and a vision of co-operation policy, while networks operating out in the field, mostly in the avant-garde, where they run risks in many ways.

For some this fragmented diversity should involve a more specific discussion, to others the diversity of networks is simply a strength and the best practices in different contexts a good learning devise.

After the presentations of the joint workshops this discussion wants to focus on how to create common generators of networks. Which communality do we see?

Judith Neisse finds communality in the quality parameter – in this case coming from the networks:

- element of excellence
- the possibility of generating a multiplier effect
- the possibility of providing added value
- knowledge based approach (training, exchange, research)
- collaborative environment
- element of democratic decision-making, inclusiveness, complementarity,
- prospective approach (advocacy)
- catalytic approach
- impact on other sectors

Ivan May proposes his tried and tested formula:

- legacy of the project
- innovation
- each of the participant should have an equity

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- catalytic approach
- governance/transparency
- sustainability

Mary Ann De Vlieg points out that the EU has also defined sustainability in the sense of spin-offs. According to Gottfried Wagner the 6 criteria proposed by May are too catholic. And the question is, how democratic are foundations & networks? Should we not admit to a loss of democracy once we are inside their realm?

Concluding:

Mary Ann De Vlieg proposes several steps to the next conference in Portugal in September/October 2008 to be hosted by the Gulbenkian Foundation that raise comments by participants who then agreed that:

- A steering committee will lead the process until Lisbon, consisting of Ugo Bacchella (Fondazione Fitzcarraldo), Gulbenkian Foundation, IFACCA, Dieter Jaenicke (Forum Cultural Mondial), IETM, Magdalena Moreno (South Project), Oumar Sall (Groupe 30 Afrique) and Paul Van Paaschen (HIVOS Foundation).
- Other members of Foundations and networks are invited to be part of the process, in order to ensure a broader representation of the variety of actors within the two groups, as far as geographic areas, artforms, typology of organizations are concerned.
- Invitation to governmental agencies and representatives need to be considered always keeping in mind the number of participants and the world-wide representation.

Pilot projects, funding plan, methodology and subject matters for the meeting will need to be decided upon: Ugo Bacchella and Antonio Pinto Ribeiro will come up in the next few weeks with a first draft + budget to be commented upon, the final programme will be ready not later than May 2008. The Lisbon meeting should be at least 4 days (for the networks, at least) and include a series of workshops.

It was also mentioned that any case it is important to open the gate and to remember that this 'think tank'/'open work table' can very well initiate projects, that best practices from the world of networks can help to be more specific in this discussion. Regional meetings are also welcome and can be arranged in the next few months within the framework of already existing initiatives.

Paul Van Paaschen endorses the idea of a research programme for the evaluation of cultural networks.

The meetings ends at 17.30 with a warm thanks to Compagnia di San Paolo and Fondazione CRT for the hospitality and to Fondazione Fitzcarraldo for the organisation.

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VI. Network meeting: Where are we now? Taking stock of post-Rio 2006

The Foundations and Networks International Workshop was preceded by an internal meeting among networks held on 16th November 2007.

Here is a summary of the conclusions from that meeting.

1. **Overall aim of the network is to build a dialogue and partnership with Foundations** – a number of issues were identified as possible areas that the Foundations and Networks might explore together:
 - social and trans-border questions
 - deepening international co-operation and the value of transnational work
 - cultural diplomacy and the shift to cultural relations/co-operation
 - encouraging artistic action in Africa – re-enchanted the youth!
 - regenerating interest in the region of the Balkans
 - identifying support beyond funding i.e. visas, distribution channels
 - young artists' mobility – a must to counter rising xenophobia
 - working in poor areas – arts and development issues
 - south-south processes and north-south processes – equal value
 - the economic logic – a good/bad model for the arts
 - Indicators - why or what indicators do we want
 - funding effects on artistic practice
 - democracy and art : process or product

2. **Exchange at many different levels between the group would give value to their actual work** – a number of practical methods were identified in which the network could support the principle of exchange:
 - skills training (incl. web optimisation, evaluation, staff management)
 - peer review/presentations on what and how working
 - staff exchanges
 - artistsexchange

3. **Role of advocacy should be integral**
 - Need to demonstrate the value of what we are doing and focussing on strengths:
 - a tool that represents people and civil society
 - new connections provide new creative possibilities
 - a way to understand what others are doing in other countries
 - a wealth of ideas and experience in inter-connecting people
 - a structure of hubs or nodes that have multiplying effects
 - opening doors and building on mutual work
 - wealth of knowledge – through wide membership
 - intellectual tools to understand what we want to do and the words to explain it to others

4. **Structure of the network**
 - need to be democratic, but not representational
 - need to involve networks not present

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- content and aim need to be clear
- strong geographical spread

5. Structure of meetings

- meetings should not be too big, envisage breakout sessions in different languages
- satellite meetings suggested as way to proceed
- an interesting balance should be sought of artists, academics, social change networks
- a geographical balance should be sought
- link the network meeting to an artistic festival or event
- observer status for governmental organisations that are participatory, collaborative and open.

6. Internet space

The website space should provide:

- ownership for all members
- a forum area
- house documents generated from the network and its members
- be available in English, Spanish and other languages

7. Language issues

- language used decided according to place being held
- volunteering interpretation may be used

8. Next steps

- -develop two proposals to present to the foundations.
- - develop a vision or statement about who we are.
- - nominate people to work on planning with foundations.

First attempt at a draft vision statement:

International artistic networks represent an explosion of creativity throughout the world; a wealth of ideas and a depth of experience in inter-connecting people. Operating together we can provide an open work table, supporting new connections and new creative possibilities.

Each network under this umbrella is aware that we are different, and acknowledges our shared worthy and ethical values. Each member has significant value in their own contexts, with a desire to share in practical and intellectual questions, and when appropriate partnering with Foundations.

The reason we work together is to emphasise what we do and understand what others are doing in other countries. Knowledge exchange may be intangible but it feeds into everything we do.

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VII. Evaluating transnational cultural cooperation: abstract from a survey on foundations

Annabel Jackson Associates was asked by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo to carry out a brief survey of **evaluation practices in foundations** involved in trans-national cultural programmes to feed into the Foundations and Networks International Workshop held in Italy 16-18th November 2007.

In this survey foundations were asked on what basis they would evaluate **their transnational cultural cooperation** and **exchange programmes**.

The answers have been classified as follows:

Process

- ✓ The level of awareness of programmes
- ✓ the civic society's perception
- ✓ the selection of participants
- ✓ the participants' motivations, curiosity and ownership
- ✓ the quality of process: planning, project management, cooperation, communication, follow up
- ✓ how cooperation is built
- ✓ the quality of partnership
- ✓ if and how the programme values are embodied (e.g. equity, openness)
- ✓ the quality of results (e.g. publications, research, art)
- ✓ the critical success factors
- ✓ good practice
- ✓ the reason for spreading good practice

Outputs

- ✓ the number of participants and users

Outcomes

- ✓ Effect on participants' academic/artistic career and skills.
- ✓ Effect on organisations' knowledge, professionalism, inspiration.
- ✓ Relationships: dialogue, cooperation, sustainability.

Impact

- ✓ the influence on local policies
- ✓ the contribution of the programme to sustainable development
- ✓ How culture acts as a tool for social inclusion and personal emancipation

Foundations were also asked about any **difficulties in evaluating** transnational cultural cooperation and exchange programmes. They identified the following:

- ✓ Lack of common definitions.
- ✓ Difficulty setting boundaries around the programme.
- ✓ Long term nature of many effects (lags).
- ✓ Difficulty in determining whether impacts came from the programme (attribution).
- ✓ Practical difficulties of coordinating evaluation questions or methods across many partners.
- ✓ Need to take account of many contextual factors e.g. political context.
- ✓ Intangible nature of many outcomes, which requires qualitative rather than quantitative methods.
- ✓ The time involved and therefore the focus needed to ensure cost-effectiveness.

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