



3 December 2020

Dear Commissioner Gabriel
(*European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth*),
Sabine Verheyen
(*Chair European Parliament Committee on Culture and Education*),
Massimiliano Smeriglio
(*Creative Europe Rapporteur: European Parliament Committee on Culture and Education*),
Barbara Gessler
(*Head of Unit: Creative Europe, DGEAC*),
Catherine Magnant
(*Head of Unit: Cultural Policy, DGEAC*),

Re: European Union cultural programme 2021-2027 and full participation of people with disabilities as artists, as arts professionals and as audiences.

On this, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the European Arts & Disability Cluster would like to wholeheartedly support and reinforce your efforts to ensure that the European Union cultural programme 2021-2027 enables full participation of people with disabilities as artists, as arts professionals and as audiences.

The institutions represented in the Cluster include disabled peoples' organisations in the arts and cultural sector with decades of expertise, alongside some of Europe's leading performing arts venues, festivals, companies. We represent grassroots micro-businesses through to major cultural institutions as well as freelance artists and arts professionals.

We understand the vital importance of the final negotiations towards the 2021-2027 European programme. We realise that there may be as little as eight weeks to ensure that the next eight years of European Union cultural actions, within the different programmes of the EU, incorporate in a more holistic way participation by people with disabilities on an equal basis with others, be that as cultural professionals, audiences, viewers or visitors.

We hope our contribution has a positive impact on your negotiations, the outcomes of which we eagerly await.

Our ask

At this key stage in the negotiations, **we call on you to ensure that the full participation of people with disabilities in the future programme's actions is listed as a key and separate priority for the programme.** From this priority all actions flow.

We understand this priority is under consideration and would like to show our support for this.

Also, towards this aim we make a new proposal - **a dedicated Open Method of Coordination (OMC) group focussing on Disability Equality within the 2023 onwards Workplan for Culture**. We ask you to consider this.

Our rationale

A transformation is taking place across Europe. Over the last decade arts institutions, cultural networks, media, audiences and local, national & regional arts funders have become aware of the high quality and frequently innovative cultural works by a unique generation of artists with disabilities – artists who bring new perspectives to cultural dialogue, and new provocations to the art forms in which they work.

At the same time audiences, cultural policymakers and European citizens are demanding that Europe's cultural sector makes greater efforts to ensure cultural works are accessible to all of Europe's citizens.

With almost 20% of Europe's population living with disability, the European cultural sector must work towards equal representation in their audiences and in the workforce. In this way, culture would also fulfil its political obligation, as laid down in Article 30 of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.

In March 2020 the [European Arts & Disability Cluster published a detailed report on Arts & Disability within European Union cultural policy](#). We made clear recommendations for policy development. We also made six clear proposals for how a new 2021-2027 funding instrument could be adapted to ensure the fuller participation of artists and cultural workers with disabilities.

For example, it is particularly important to provide budgets for the production and implementation of accessibility that are financed separately from the actual production budget. In this context, the Erasmus + programme has already implemented an important first step with its budget category "Special Needs Support".

We remind you of this report and its recommendations at this crucial time in the development of the programme.

We wish you great resolve in the weeks and months to come.

Yours sincerely,

The European Arts & Disability Cluster

The European Arts & Disability Cluster represents 10 current and recent Creative Europe Projects / Culture Programme cooperation projects, and 5 Erasmus + Projects focusing on the work of professional disabled artists.

Our cluster also represents 7 other transnational collaborative cultural projects funded through the European Cultural Foundation, Arts Council Ireland, French Ministry of Culture, Migros Culture Percentage, British Council, & Arts Council England.

Current Creative Europe Projects

- Europe Beyond Access
 - Onassis Cultural Centre (GR)
 - Kampnagel (DE)
 - Holland Dance Festival (NL)
 - British Council (UK)
 - Skånes Dansteater (SWE)

- Per.Art (SRB)
- Oriente Occidente (IT)

Affiliate Partners

- EUCREA Verband Kunst Und Behinderung e.V. (DE)
- Acesso Cultura (PT)
- ImPArT
 - Un-Label e.V. (DE)
 - Oriente Occidente (IT)
 - NCA Small Theatre (AM)
 - SMouTh (GR)
- Trasná Na Líne
 - Moomsteatern (SWE)
 - Compagnie de L'Oiseau Mouche (FR)
 - Blue Teapot Theatre Company (IRE)
 - Theater Babel Rotterdam (NL)
 - Teatr 21 (PL)
- International Sign: Connecting Deaf Performing Arts
 - Tyst Teater (SWE)
 - Teatteri Totti (FIN)
 - Teater Manu (NOR)
 - International Visual Theatre (FR)
 - Zentrum für Kultur und visuelle Kommunikation (DE)
- BEYOND SIGNS
 - Associazione Culturale Fattoria Vittadini (IT)
 - Udruga Kazalište, Audiovizualne umjetnosti i kultura gluhih - DLAN (HRV)
 - Associação Cultural Voarte (PT)

Current Erasmus + projects

- Creability
 - Un-Label e.V. (DE)
 - SMouTh (GR)
- Ogmios
 - Compagnie de L'Oiseau Mouche (FR)
 - Mind The Gap (UK)
 - Moomsteatern (SWE)
- Theatre Without Borders
 - Instytut Tolerancji w Łodzi (PL)
 - Nalaga'at Center (ISR)
 - Echodrama Cultural Group (GR)
 - LOKSTOFF! THEATER IM OFFENTLICHEN RAUM EV (DE)
 - Poleski Osrodek Sztuki (PL)
 - Riksteatern Crea (SWE)

Recent Creative Europe Projects

- Crossing the Line
FR, SWE, UK
- Un-Label: New Grounds for Inclusive Performing Arts in Europe
DE, GR, UK, TR
- Moving Beyond Inclusion
UK, IT, CH, SWE, DE, HRV
- Audience Blending by Arts
BEL, PT, BGR, FIN, UK,

Culture Programme Projects

- Unlimited Access:
HRV, PT, GR, UK

Recent Erasmus + projects

- iDance
NL, UK, SWE, GR
- Yes we are in
BEL, UK, HRV, FIN

Other trans-national European collaborations

- ShareMusic & Performing Arts
- IntegrArt
- Unlimited
- Arts & Disability Ireland
- SPARK
- Ni Chawn Ein Dile
- European Network of Cultural Centres