

EFFEA

EUROPEAN FESTIVALS FUND
FOR EMERGING ARTISTS

AN INITIATIVE OF THE
EUROPEAN FESTIVALS ASSOCIATION



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EFFEA Duty of Care Protocol

Generation #2 – 2023/ 2024

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The European Festivals Fund for Emerging Artists – EFFEА, an initiative of the European Festivals Association, offers emerging artists a platform to develop their careers on an international level through festivals. In its second round, EFFEА supported 49 cross-border collaboration projects (“residencies”) involving 170 festivals and 49 artists or artistic groups from 14 artistic disciplines and 36 countries during twelve months (1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024).



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Reflections on Sustainability Issues

The “EFFEA Duty of Care Protocol: Generation #2” aims to provide arts festivals with guidelines for their working relationship with emerging artists. “Emerging artists” are not defined by age but by their potential to “breakthrough” internationally, bringing fresh perspectives to festival audiences and the artistic field. Through the Duty of Care Protocol, EFFEА aims to explore the unique advantages of close artist-festival collaborations, uncovering how these opportunities can be exploited while addressing its challenges.

The records of the reflections from Call #2 residencies are the basis of this edition of the EFFEА Duty of Care Protocol. Like the selected projects of EFFEА Call #1, festivals selected under Call #2 were asked to indicate in their reports at the end of residencies which dimension of sustainability they paid particular attention to during their residency. The participating festivals could exploit the period spent with emerging artists to share views on selected issues. These topics relate to various fundamental aspects of arts festivals. The outcome of this intellectual exercise has been distilled in the reports. Most of the 49

residencies fulfilled this task diligently. The efforts of those leading festivals that have devoted considerable attention to this task are particularly appreciated.

A valuable source of inspiration to the Duty Of Care were also the two online seminars organised during EFFEa Call #2 (Intake and Outtake Seminars, at the beginning and the end of the residency period respectively) with the participating festivals, artists, platform members as well as invited personalities. The EFFEa Stories, which continue to be presented on the EFFEa website and Facebook page, offer exceptional insights.

Ten thematic areas form the next ten sections of this text. The order reflects the relevant weight of the ten topics in the residency reports (and not the frequency with which festivals selected them). We laid special emphasis on communicating the messages of this round of EFFEa residencies regarding the ten sustainability dimensions from the perspective of the participating festivals **in their own words**.

1. New Power Relationships Between Artists and Programmers

The relevant sections in the residency reports reflect a shift from traditional hierarchical models to more collaborative and reciprocal partnerships and evolving dynamics between artists and festival programmers. This transformation is driven by digital innovation, changing audience expectations, and a push for diversity and inclusivity in the arts.

Historically, festival programmers held the upper hand, acting as gatekeepers who curated lineups with minimal input from artists. However, the rise of social media and direct-to-fan platforms has empowered artists to cultivate their own audiences, reducing dependency on festivals for visibility. Artists with strong followings now wield greater leverage, as their presence can significantly boost ticket sales and social media buzz.

The many constraints, tensions and pressures involved in planning and implementing a festival programme are detrimental to the development of mutual trust and respect. The residencies have created laboratory conditions by providing sufficient time and motivation for open dialogue. This enables artists and festival directors to identify the building blocks of greater mutual trust and respect. How to exercise the same skills *in vivo*, in 'normal' circumstances, is the challenge for those involved, artists and festival organisers alike. The residencies offered festival programmers and artists a good opportunity to discuss these questions together.

The collaborative and informal nature of the residency allowed for open dialogue, leading to a shift in the traditional hierarchy between artists and programmers. These interactions built trust and respect. – Panč Standup Comedy Festival, Ivančna Gorica, Slovenia

We were encouraged to think of programmers as partners rather than gatekeepers, creating a space for more open dialogue about the work's direction and its potential to reach new audiences. – Dublin Theatre Festival, Dublin, Ireland

The residencies confirmed that festival programmers are increasingly adopting a co-creative approach. They engage artists earlier in the planning process, allowing for input on themes, stage design, and audience interaction. This not only enriches the festival experience but also ensures programming resonates with diverse communities.

The feedback from programmers was supportive, allowing artists to retain creative control while receiving guidance on how to navigate institutional expectations. This shift toward a more balanced partnership between artists and programmers is a crucial finding, emphasising the need for structures that foster mutual respect and shared decision-making. – Dance Festival Malta, Floriana, Malta

The following quotes make it clear that the main topic of the open dialogue between artists and programmers is the programme itself. How to shape it to fulfil best the expectations raised by it for all stakeholders: artists (creators and performers), festival organisers, funders and the audience.

The programmer took the musicians' input seriously, particularly when selecting pieces that represented their cultural heritage but also identifying the needs of the festival in shaping the programme, thus shifting the traditional power dynamics toward a more inclusive and collaborative model. – Usedomer Musikfestival, Heringsdorf, Germany

The usual power dynamics shifted. Artists had more input on how their work was presented, and programmers got more involved in the creative side. – Internationales Digitalkunst Festival, Stuttgart, Germany



©Dance Festival Malta

The residency enabled us to establish a more partnership-based relationship with young artists, positioning the festival as an institution that responds to the needs of the artist rather than imposing requirements or building expectations. – Santarcangelo Festival, Santarcangelo di Romagna, Italy

The artist retained control over her project while benefiting from the insights and expertise of the programmers. – Bozar Afropolitan Festival, Brussels, Belgium

The fundamental power relationship between festival organisers and artists is often complemented by other dimensions, such as gender. The residencies have also provided favourable conditions for working on this issue:

The absence of gendered hierarchies led to a more fluid and equitable artistic process, where every voice was valued equally, resulting in richer artistic outcomes. – Visavì Gorizia Dance Festival, Gorizia, Italy

The lengthy exchanges between the emerging artists who benefit from the hospitality of the leading festival and the participating ones influence much more than the artistic programme or the role the artist plays in it. Often, it is the whole character and mission of the festival that has been the subject of an exchange of views.

Continued an ongoing dialogue about expanding the artist's role beyond project delivery to offering practical ideas for change and inspiration to festivals; Aimed to reframe the artist-festival relationship, moving from a purely contractual model to a more collaborative, change-oriented approach. – Passage Festival, Helsingør, Denmark



©Santarcangelo Festival

In this context, during the residency, the artists were able to gain a better understanding of the different constraints faced by festival makers, which is important knowledge that they can use to shape their artistic contributions to future festival programmes:

The residency provided insights into the importance of balancing artistic needs with practical constraints. This prompted reflections on how better awareness and negotiation can support artistic projects while accommodating logistical realities” – Festival Catalysi, Cesena, Italy

The project has highlighted particular circumstances in which collaboration between artists and festival organisers requires the learning of new specific skills necessary for performance.

By integrating live coding with Internet-of-Things devices, sound, video control interfaces, and Virtual Reality, the residency redefined the traditional roles of artists and programmers.

Artists were empowered to directly engage with programming tools, creating an environment where technical and artistic expertise converged. – Píksel Festival for Kunst og Fri Teknologi, Bergen, Norway

The theme of new power relationships resonated mainly with festivals from the South, while only a few festivals from the Eastern countries chose this theme. In another dimension, theatre and dance festivals chose this theme most often out of the ten themes offered. (Similar to festivals with digital arts and storytelling, but they were too few to consider this a typical feature.)

2. Inclusivity

Inclusivity is a cornerstone of successful arts festivals, fostering diverse participation and ensuring that events resonate with a broad audience. By prioritising inclusivity, festivals create spaces that celebrate varied cultural, social, and artistic expressions, making art accessible to all.

A key aspect of inclusivity is representation. Programming should feature artists from diverse backgrounds, including marginalised and underrepresented groups in society. This not only promotes equity but also enriches the festival's artistic offerings.

It is in the nature of inclusivity that participating festivals covered a wide spectrum of this theme. Dance festivals showed the greatest affinity with this subject (the same goes for the few heritage and spoken word festivals). Geographically, inclusivity was given less attention at residencies in Southern regions than in the other parts of Europe.

In the most obvious cases, the diversity of those directly involved in the residency activities is a testament to inclusivity:

The workshops fostered inclusivity by inviting diverse community participation, at European level, ensuring that various perspectives were integrated into the artistic process. The residency demonstrated that an inclusive approach not only benefits artistic practice but also enriches the final work by including varied voices and experiences. – Dance Festival Malta, Floriana, Malta

The intercultural aspect connected to the residency, with musicians from Portugal, Spain and Slovenia, is also of a strong inclusivity component, as to explore different artistic cultural points of view in a European perspective. – Early Music Festival of the Pyrenees, La Seu d'Urgell, Spain

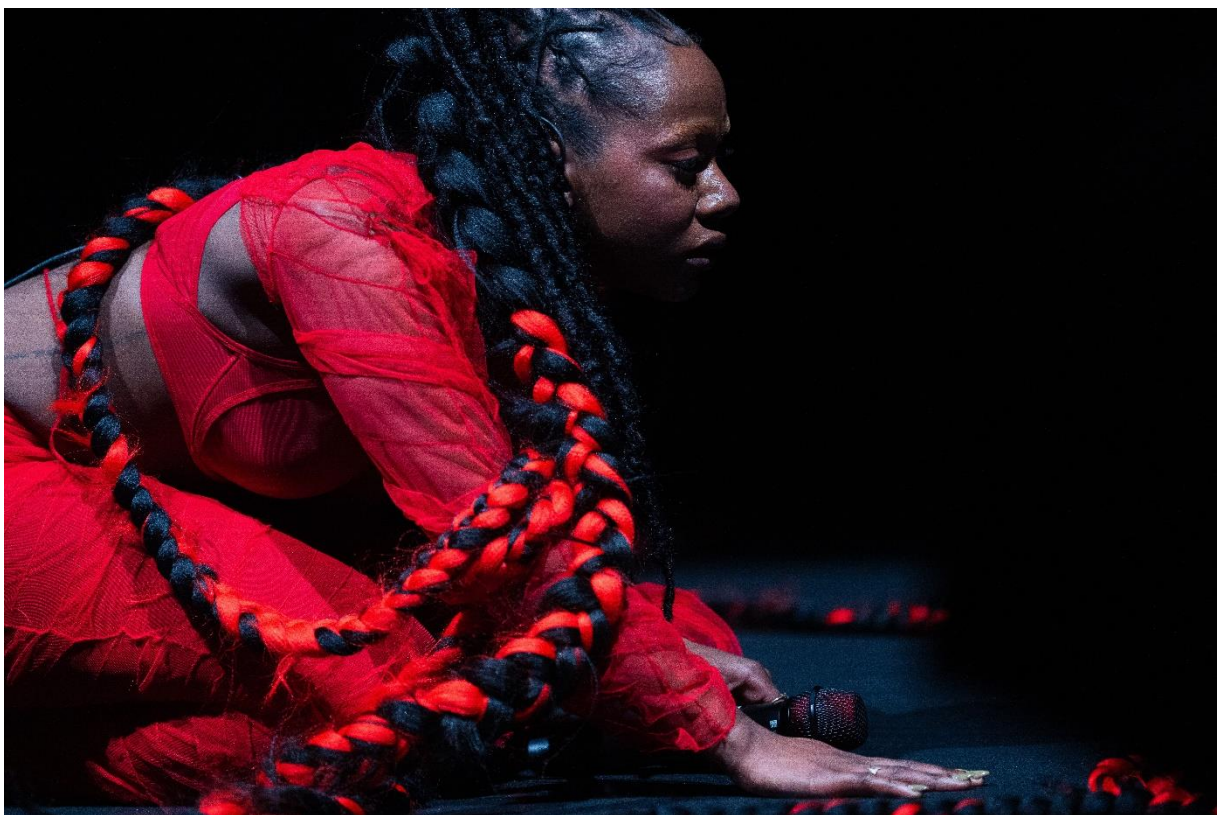
Accessibility is a critical factor. Organisers must consider physical access for individuals with disabilities, offer affordable ticketing options to accommodate diverse audiences. Family-friendly and intergenerational activities further enhance inclusivity.

The venue was accessible to all, and the presentation was open. We had babies, elderly people, mothers and queer people along with members of the dance community and

other artists (theatre, visual arts) and dance critics. – Latitudes Contemporaines, Lille, France

However, inclusivity is not just about who is in the room, to borrow the words from the Irish festival, but concerns the content and spirit of the artistic activity, too. The sensitive notion of identity comes into play:

Inclusivity wasn't just about who was in the room, but about ensuring that all aspects of our identities—our languages, our cultural backgrounds, and our lived experiences—were acknowledged and respected in both the creative process and the professional environment. How can we ensure that the multilingual nature of the piece, which reflects our complex identities, remains central without being tokenised? How can we make our work accessible to more diverse audiences without diluting its authenticity? – Dublin Theatre Festival, Dublin, Ireland



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The notion of inclusivity is at the heart of audience development efforts. This can be done with a broad target, or with a niche objective, as in the case of a literary festival:

Different event formats, including public discussions, workshops and sound installations, enabled different demographics to access this author's literature and its key themes, particularly among younger audiences and those unfamiliar with contemporary Catalan literature. – Fabula: Literature of the World Festival, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The goal of inclusion is broader when it comes to championing avant-garde and unconventional artists and their work. This aspiration can sometimes take very sophisticated forms:

Inclusivity was a key focus, highlighted by the artist's work, which operates on the margins of mainstream practices. The residency raised important questions on how to ensure long-term support for artists who challenge conventional frameworks. – Festival Catalysi, Cesena, Italy

One of the core objectives of the project was to foster inclusivity by making experimental art accessible to people with varying skill levels and backgrounds. The use of free and open-source technologies allowed individuals with limited experience in coding or digital art to engage in the creative process. The workshops on live coding with Hydra, aimed at kids and young artists, were particularly effective in demonstrating how coding can serve as a visual and performative medium, encouraging participants to explore new forms of creative expression. This inclusive approach attracted international attention and facilitated virtual socialization, breaking down barriers and enabling cultural exchange across geographical and physical limitations. – Píksel Festival for Kunst og Fri Teknologi, Bergen, Norway

Overcoming language barriers represents another dimension in the area of inclusion. One residency focused on the special aspect of sign language for the hearing impaired, a special group that is to be integrated into the festival audience:

With international touring, language is often an obstacle to making the production understandable for the local community. Topics such as subtitling, audio description, the use of easy language were discussed. Other aspects of removing barriers in production, such as sign language interpreting, indication systems and tactile guides for images were presented. – Schwindelfrei Festival, Mannheim, Germany

Showing a particular degree of sensitivity, a voice of warning was also sounded about the many faces of inclusiveness:

Taking care of someone's access needs in order to work as much as possible on inclusion sometimes means crossing someone else's needs and boundaries. – Het TheaterFestival Vlaanderen, Antwerp, Belgium

3. Environmentally Friendly Practises

Environmentally friendly practices at arts festivals are essential to reducing the cultural sector's ecological footprint and inspiring broader sustainability efforts. Festivals, often resource-intensive, can adopt innovative strategies to minimise environmental impact while promoting eco-consciousness.

The issue of organising environmentally friendly festivals usually involves a long list of tools and means. The residency reports resist the temptation to produce good practice checklists and limit themselves to selecting notable points, first and above all with references to travel and transport solutions:

Many of the comedians travelled by foot or bicycle to attend, further limiting the environmental impact. For international participants, we practiced ride-sharing, with artists from other countries traveling together in a single vehicle. By sourcing from local food providers, we minimised transportation distances. This collective effort showed how practical small steps can contribute to reducing the ecological

footprint of artistic events. – Panč Standup Comedy Festival, Ivančna Gorica, Slovenia

The use of hybrid formats allowed some partners to participate online, reducing international travel and limiting mobility-related emissions. – Festival Catalysi, Cesena, Italy

From the outset, efforts were made to incorporate low-energy light sources, such as lasers and LEDs, into the installation. Transportation was also a consideration, with the artist opting for a small personal vehicle to reduce the carbon footprint, rather than a larger van. – Mumush, Adrianu Mare, Romania

Key practices include waste reduction and recycling. Festivals can implement reusable cups, cutlery, and dishware while providing accessible recycling and composting stations. Encouraging attendees to bring reusable items also helps reduce single-use plastics. The choice of materials used in various ways during the preparation and implementation of the festival is part of the specific framework of steps in favour of the environment:

Clay work skills were developed: learnings on how to extract the clay without making a big impact, how to use it the most efficiently possible and how to work with it. – Waking Life, Flor de Rosa, Portugal

There was an important emphasis on using materials from the area and from local traditions, like water containers, where the local traditions are marked by their water culture. In all the three locations the artists used already existing objects, like different glass bottles, ceramic bowls or other containers in different sizes and shapes. This meant that apart from the specific production needs for capturing the sound, there was no need to buy new objects, thus promoting re- and upcycling practices. – Ogni Altro Suono, Castrignano de' Greci, Italy

One residency raised the issue of one of the less frequently discussed ways in which humans endanger the natural environment, namely noise pollution (light pollution's evil sister):

In the silent concert that took place in the last two editions in the Atlantic Botanical Garden a system of wireless headphones was used that eliminates all types of noise pollution in the environment and reduces energy consumption to zero during the event. – L.E.V. Festival, Gijón, Spain

Fortunately, there are a growing number of cases where concern for Mother Nature is the fundamental *raison d'être* of the festival:

Incorporating the journey itself as an integral part of the artwork has revealed that while this approach demands considerable time, energy, and resources, it offers a revolutionary perspective on creating environmental performance in collaboration with other species and natural environments. – Passage Festival, Helsingør, Denmark

Unlike the previous theme, few dance festivals addressed environmental issues, while it was the most discussed sustainability subject in music and visual arts festivals. Surprisingly, no residency in a Western country focused on this theme, while it was frequently taken up by festivals in the South.



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4. Meaningful Planning

A meaningful plan begins with a clear mission and vision that resonates with both artists and audiences. Arts festivals must identify their unique cultural or social value, whether showcasing emerging talent, addressing pressing themes, or fostering community cohesion. This clarity guides programming decisions, from curating diverse lineups to incorporating innovative mediums such as digital art or interactive installations.

Time is the great asset that the EFFEFA programme can offer its beneficiaries. Time that artists and festival staff can use to interact and, among other benefits, to perfect their planning skills. The time of residencies was particularly valuable for those participating festivals that covered different, sometimes very different, countries, cultures and situations - and this type of festival was in fact in the majority. Intensive communication and a willingness to be flexible were identified among the most important prerequisites for effective planning.

Planning across multiple festivals in different countries highlighted the importance of flexibility and proactive logistics management. The partners ensure a smooth transition by staying in contact throughout the year and constantly communicating with the artists. Key practices included maintaining strong communication between all partners and quick logistical adjustments, which ensured the programme's success. – Summit of the Non-Aligned, Belgrade, Serbia

While having a strong initial concept is critical for success, being overly rigid can lead to setbacks. The artist embraced the philosophy of 'making an effect from a defect,' acknowledging that while the installation was carefully planned, physical limitations

related to space, time, and electronic equipment often required adjustments. The ability to adapt while preserving the core meaning of the work became a key aspect of the creative process. – Mumush, Adrianu Mare, Romania

The project gave the artist an opportunity of evolving the project during the course of the residency and each new performance session was a unique live - session, where new connections were made. – Re-connect Art, Prague, Czechia

Community engagement is a cornerstone of effective planning. Collaborative efforts with local artists, businesses, and audiences create a festival that feels authentic and inclusive, fostering loyalty and broader participation. In the best of cases, logistical adaptation to local technical conditions goes hand in hand with adaptation to local cultural conditions:

A clear takeaway was the importance of aligning artistic goals with the logistical realities of each venue, programme, and audience. By incorporating both classical and local folk elements into the performances, the quartet was able to tailor programs that resonated deeply with different communities, enhancing their cultural relevance. – MiraTone Festival and Academy, Budapest, Hungary



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Cross-border co-operation is an essential feature of EFFEAs residencies. In addition to cultural differences this often confronts the festival organisers with banal and prosaic challenges.

The festivals wished to develop regular communication among themselves and with the artist. This raised questions such as what communication channel to use, how to adjust on the different time zones. – Thessaloniki Animation Festival, Thessaloniki, Greece

Planners must engage artists, community leaders, and sponsors early in the process, fostering a sense of ownership among all parties. Transparent communication helps ensure the festival's goals and expectations are shared and achievable. The time available and

devoted to the co-ordinated preparation (and planning) of the residency is particularly valuable before the festival actually takes place.

A major benefit of the early decision for EFFE grants and long window of implementation was that we could plan for this residency with meaning. – Gothenburg Fringe Festival, Gothenburg, Sweden

Involving the artists early in the planning process ensured that their needs were met while also allowing for a more cohesive artistic outcome. The careful planning made the musicians' experience seamless and enjoyable, despite the challenges of performing in new environments. The residency highlighted the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in organising cross-cultural projects. – Usedomer Musikfestival, Heringsdorf, Germany

Several participating festivals provided exceptionally rich content and programmes. Meaningful planning is crucial for the success of such complex festivals, as it ensures that creative vision aligns with organisational goals, audience expectations, and sustainability. This process involves strategic foresight, adaptability, and stakeholder engagement, enabling festivals to deliver impactful experiences. The complexity of the programme sometimes requires fundamental changes to the planning process.

This year we have concentrated most of the programmes in one main venue and turned it into an interdisciplinary, inter-generational, international co-working lab, offering different types of activities in mixed programmatic blocks, such as workshops, live performances, debates, film screening, seminars, literary reading, live cooking sessions, concerts etc. – Reconnect Art, Prague, Czechia

Meaningful planning encompasses the wider ecosystem of the arts festival and goes beyond its temporal and spatial boundaries. In addition to what happens on stage, artists and festival audiences should be given opportunities for profound interaction:

Creating a space in the city (a park) where food, drinks, and music were offered—highlighted the importance of fostering a communal atmosphere. A space to encourage post-show conversations, emphasising that the dialogue surrounding the performances is as vital as the shows themselves. – Philippi Festival, Kavala, Greece

Residencies with the leading festival residing in an Eastern country addressed this theme most frequently; this is strange given their indifference to the topic of power relations, though the programmer-artist relationship also plays an important role in planning.

5. Hybrid Presentation Contexts and Other Digital Solutions

Hybrid presentation contexts and digital solutions are transforming arts festivals, expanding their reach and adaptability in an increasingly connected world. These approaches combine in-person and virtual experiences, offering innovative ways for audiences to engage with art.

Hybrid formats enable global access, allowing remote audiences to participate through livestreams, virtual reality (VR), or interactive digital platforms. This inclusivity broadens the festival's impact, connecting diverse communities while reducing geographical and

financial barriers. For artists, digital tools can offer creative freedom, enabling experimental presentations that blend physical and virtual elements.

Digital solutions can also enhance audience engagement. Features such as mobile apps, augmented reality (AR) experiences, and real-time interactive sessions deepen participation, creating personalised and immersive interactions. By integrating technology thoughtfully, arts festivals can foster creativity, inclusivity, and sustainability, enriching cultural experiences for all.

The EFFEА residency reports reflect how the essentially analogue world of festivals is looking for ways to adapt. Participants in the programme demonstrated a wide variety of hybrid solutions.

The residency enabled us to witness a unique way of creating a narrative background to a show, of how to use costumes and how digital technology can add a unique flavour to an improvised performance. – Itt és Most Társulat, Budapest, Hungary

The use of lasers was very much appreciated by the audience and was aesthetically appealing. – L.E.V. Festival, Gijón, Spain

Hybrid solutions sometimes require advanced knowledge of digital technology on the part of the festival organisers, the artists and the audience:

A key outcome of the residency was the development of a new visual interactive instrument using Hydra Live Coding. This instrument facilitates real-time collaboration between audiences and artists, blending digital and physical experiences seamlessly. – Píksel Festival for Kunst og Fri Teknologi, Bergen, Norway

The digital releases masterclass emphasised the importance of Digital Signal Processing (DSP) in music distribution, especially exploring strategies for Spotify. – Summit of the Non-Aligned, Belgrade, Serbia

The various aspects of hybridity demonstrate, among other things, its relevance to climate protection, but also the threats it poses to live interpersonal interactions.

Zoom and Trello marked a significant shift towards hybrid presentation contexts and digital organisation tools, opening up more flexible options for collaboration and reducing the need for travel. This shift not only streamlined communication but also allowed for more efficient, environmentally conscious co-ordination. – Panč Standup Comedy Festival, Ivančna Gorica, Slovenia

The use of hybrid formats allowed some partners to participate online, reducing international travel and limiting mobility-related emissions. The residency, particularly the workshop, explored the potential and challenges of hybrid presentation formats. Engaging international partners online expanded participation but also revealed the limitations of virtual interactions compared to in-person ones. – Festival Catalysi, Cesena, Italy

Festivals are not blind to the threats of this brave new digital world:

The residency prompted us to question the balance between technological innovation and ethical considerations. This led to a series of discussions about the broader implications of voice cloning and deepfake technology, helping us to better address these issues in our work. The residency provided valuable opportunities to explore and address critical

questions and practices related to digital technology and its impact on society. – Latitudes Contemporaines, Lille, France

Apart from the easily predictable attention that hybridity and other digital solutions attract at festivals dealing with digital art, given the small number of festivals addressing this and the remaining sustainability issues, sorting festivals by geographic region or art form makes little sense.



©Festival Catalysi

6. Arts and Well-being

Most artists have always believed that their work could be part of a healing process, whether mental or physical. And there is growing academic evidence of the positive impact of the arts on well-being. Arts festivals thus have a profound impact on individual and community well-being, offering opportunities for cultural engagement, social connection, and emotional rejuvenation. These events foster a sense of belonging and provide a platform for self-expression, making them powerful tools for enhancing mental and social health.

At a community level, arts festivals promote cohesion by celebrating shared values and cultural heritage. They create inclusive spaces where diverse groups can interact, building bridges across social divides.

Without claiming to lack interest in the broader connotations of the relationship between culture and health, most of the residencies have chosen a narrow perspective of well-being within the framework of the festival. However, some exceptions have chosen a broader scope:

The growing understanding of how literature can contribute to well-being encouraged future integration of literary practices into mental health discussions and workshops. This raised new questions about how residencies and festivals can more actively promote well-

being through artistic engagement. – Fabula: Literature of the World Festival, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The residency naturally intersected with discussions about well-being, linked to the theme of genetic modification explored in 'Selective Breeding.' The artistic process highlighted the balance between physical endurance and mental health, showing how art can probe and enhance our understanding of well-being. The performers were challenged to explore these ideas through their bodies, engaging deeply with the theme, while audiences were prompted to reconsider their views on these pressing issues. – Visavi Gorizia Dance Festival, Gorizia, Italy

Within the narrow festival framework, the majority of participating festivals focused largely on artists. More specifically, on the impact of participating in a festival or of taking part in the residency on the personal well-being of emerging artists. Some leading festivals seem to have gone to great lengths to nurture the resident artist. In some cases, specific wishes or needs have also been considered:

The teams of each partner festival were attentive to the needs of the artists and ensured that their requests were met as closely as possible. We tried our best to find a flat next to the residency or masterclass. – Latitudes Contemporaines, Lille, France



©N:ear Festival_Slavo Uhrin

We really focused on the well-being of the artists, both creatively and mentally. Giving them a supportive environment to explore their work without too much pressure led to better outcomes and helped their personal well-being. This showed us how important it is to take care of the whole artist, not just their output. – Internationales Digitalkunst Festival, Stuttgart, Germany

How to remain in good health during tours and traveling? There is no right answer for everyone, but doing sports, being active, trying to sleep as well as possible (on tours it is very hard to sleep) and taking supplements. – Sõru Jazz, Lemmaku küla, Estonia

The mental health workshop in Pècs addressed the challenges artists and music venue workers face regarding well-being, especially when touring, organising a tour or managing their careers. One was helping with tools for stress management, raising awareness about mental health issues in the music industry. – Summit of the Non-Aligned, Belgrade, Serbia

In terms of the collective health of the festival staff, the artistic group and their co-operating community, the conclusion and recommendation of a theatre festival deserves attention. The access officer or confidential adviser in question is a specialist whose service is compulsory under Belgian law in any workplace with more than 50 employees.

It's very important to discuss each other's needs in advance, individually and collectively, to try and analyse if there are opposite needs in a group. Next to that it's always good to invite an access worker (vertrouwenspersoon) in case of conflicting needs to see how we can make the collaboration as comfortable as possible for all the participants. – Het TheaterFestival Vlaanderen, Antwerp, Belgium

Among the EFEEA residencies, those led by Western festivals and those dealing with dance have shown a particular interest in the connections between well-being and the arts.

7. Fair Remuneration and Working Conditions of the Artist

Fair remuneration and working conditions for artists at arts festivals are essential for fostering a sustainable and equitable cultural ecosystem. Despite their central role in creating vibrant festival experiences, artists often face challenges such as low pay, unclear and vague contracts, and inadequate support during events.

Remuneration must reflect the time, creativity, and labour invested by artists. Transparent fee structures, with clear communication of payment timelines and coverage of associated costs like travel and accommodation, ensure that artists can focus on their performances without financial strain. Equal pay practices are also critical, addressing disparities based on gender, race, or experience levels.

Many festivals are addressing these issues by adopting artist-centric policies, such as standardised contracts and collective bargaining agreements. Collaborating with artist unions or advocacy groups can further enhance fairness.

This sustainability theme dominated the first edition of the EFEEA project. A year later, other themes took the lead. However, this does not mean that concern for the living and working conditions of those affected is diminishing. Both the festival organisers and the artists involved in the EFEEA project are aware that, with few exceptions, they share the almost constant state of precariousness. This is a situation in which the need to ensure fair remuneration of artists far exceeds the capacity of most arts festivals.

In this context, the problem of differences in social conditions between different countries came to the fore; it was forcefully expressed in the reports of several residencies:

In a staff of arts professionals based between two different countries, expectations towards fair remuneration may vary according to the living condition of the home country. This includes the cost of living, but also the presence of social benefits for arts professionals. The residency highlighted the privilege of French artists compared to Italian ones, and therefore the need of counterbalancing when engaging in trans-national collaboration. The residency proved the need of a harmonisation of the social protection schemes within EU, calibrated on the local cost of living, and the need for art professionals of an EU taxation that goes beyond national systems. – Comitato Teatro Treviso, Treviso, Italy



©Festival Jeunes Pousses_Irene Michailidis

The conversations emphasised the need for transparency and fairness in how artists are compensated, especially in international projects where disparities in economic conditions between countries can lead to inequities. The residency underscored the importance of establishing clear guidelines and agreements that ensure artists are fairly remunerated for their work, regardless of the country they are working in. – International Puppet Theatre Festival, Karlovac, Croatia

Challenges related to fair remuneration and working conditions were evident, particularly with regard to navigating various regulatory frameworks in different countries. – Summit of the Non-Aligned, Belgrade, Serbia

The EFEEA programme focuses on emerging artists. For them, the question of fair remuneration is a natural common concern. They all carry the marshal's baton in their rucksack (to quote Napoleon), but unfortunately many of them will no longer retain the status of 'small or less established artists' for whom the Maltese festival organisers have expressed particular sympathy:

The experience emphasised how necessary it is to address inequalities in payment structures, particularly for smaller or less-established artists who may struggle to receive fair compensation. – Dance Festival Malta, Floriana, Malta

Festival organisers and artists expect public support, particularly subsidies, at various levels: from central government, regional authorities and municipalities. The same applies to civil and private donations. They have different degrees of predictability. The most uncertain generosity seems to come from the local level.

The residency helped reduce dependence on unpredictable local sources. It allowed emerging artists to receive fair remuneration for their work—a crucial development in a network of festivals where, for a long time, covering travel and accommodation costs was standard practice, but artist fees were often overlooked due to budget constraints. – Novo Doba Festival of Non-Aligned Comics, Belgrade, Serbia

Leading festivals in Northern and Western countries - which make up 40% of this EFFEAs edition - have almost completely avoided this topic. We do not assume that artists' conditions do not need improvement there, but it appears to be a more immediate concern elsewhere on the continent. One in five residencies in the South and East addressed the issue of fair remuneration and working conditions for artists. Except for music festivals, almost none of which chose to delve deeper into the topic. Unlike the few festivals presenting street art or applied art, the majority of which addressed the topic.

The themes of well-being and the arts, as well as fair remuneration of the artist, have a lot in common, especially when they relate to festivals. It is interesting to note that all three EFFEAs residencies dedicated to street art addressed these two subjects in conjunction.

8. Sustainable Touring

Sustainable touring between festivals is becoming a priority as the environmental impact of the arts industry gains scrutiny. Touring, while essential for artists to reach audiences, often involves significant carbon emissions from travel, energy use, and resource consumption.

To mitigate this, artists and festival organisers are adopting eco-friendly practices. For transportation, shifting to trains, buses, or electric vehicles instead of flights reduces emissions. Some artists are also embracing "slow touring," planning performances along optimised routes to minimise travel distances.

In the EFFEAs context, sustainable touring is one of the less frequently addressed sustainability topics, especially at music festivals. Together with the theme of environmentally friendly practices, the two par excellence sustainability issues, were addressed by the majority of festivals with digital art or architecture; moreover, half of the few Nordic residencies addressed both environmental topics. The situation was different for Western festivals, which ignored this combination.

The relevant sections of the EFFEAs reports present different methods for making tours sustainable, highlighting the costs and complexity involved.

Creative strategies to reduce the CO2 cost of producing and distributing theatre across EU. Artists and programmers should receive funding to implement such strategies, and

politicians should invest in policies and infrastructures that facilitate this kind of touring. – Gioiosaetamorosa, Treviso, Italy

(The residency) “highlighted the extensive planning required for sustainable touring, especially for complex journeys (e.g., securing boat transportation from Scotland to Norway). It explored effective methods for documenting extended journeys and engaging remote audiences through various media (blogs, photos, videos, social media). – Passage Festival, Helsingør, Denmark

In addition to the responsible planning of sustainable means of transport, the choice of destinations themselves is also crucial for the environmental impact of the festival:

The various activities in this project have been designed to be located in places that are accessible in a sustainable way or, when this was complicated, brought to different locations to reach audiences who have less need to travel. – Latitudes Contemporaines, Lille, France

It is a bitter irony that Ukrainian artists choose to travel not for reasons of sustainability, but because of the harsh conditions imposed on them, including the stress of spending long periods alone:

The decision of traveling by train had not been brought by ecological arguments but come as an effect of Ukraine being completely closed for air traffic. This brings reflection about the limited options of extending such travels to further partners (when traveling artist already adding several extra days for travel and recharge - being away from home, family and local job obligations). – Spring Performing Arts Festival, Utrecht, Netherlands

There are certain strange circumstances in which festival organisers must exercise special sensitivity to protect nature and its creatures:

Olga's installation was presented in the park, on the pond with ducks. Assembly and disassembly of the installation took place with respect for the natural environment so as not to disturb the ducks' habitats. – Bella Skyway Festival, Toruń, Poland



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9. Gender Equality

Gender equality at arts festivals is crucial for fostering inclusivity, promoting diverse perspectives, and driving cultural innovation. Despite progress, many festivals still face gender imbalances in programming, leadership, and representation, necessitating deliberate efforts to create equitable platforms.

Achieving gender balance in lineups is a key focus. Festival organisers are increasingly committing to quotas or goals ensuring equal opportunities for women and non-binary artists. This not only addresses historical underrepresentation but also enriches the artistic landscape with varied voices.

Leadership roles within festivals are another area for reform. Increasing the presence of women in decision-making positions promotes diverse perspectives in curation and operations, further shaping equitable practices.

As in the first edition of the EFFEА programme, the participating festivals paid little attention to the various aspects of gender equality. The general commitment of arts festivals to equal opportunities for women and men is an established fact. It can therefore be assumed that this issue is self-evident to them and hardly needs to be addressed. Wherever it is addressed in the reports, the topic is dealt with without any problems. This includes when it comes to non-normative sexual orientation.

The organising team was diverse in terms of both age and gender, which fostered a more inclusive and balanced working environment. – Panč Standup Comedy Festival, Ivančna Gorica, Slovenia

The predominantly female staff at the Catalysi Festival and Teatro Comandini, in both leadership and executive roles, contributed to greater female representation in artistic and organisational processes. – Festival Catalysi, Cesena, Italy

Gender equality and inclusivity were also very strong points in this residency, as the artist is a female instrumentalist, and furthermore since her instrument is very specific and not normally included in the jazz repertoire. – JazzHR, Zagreb, Croatia



©Gothenburg Fringe Festival_Dan Zerlin

As a nonbinary artist, I am mindful of how gender dynamics play out in collaborative environments. The residency provided an opportunity to engage in discussions around gender equality, not only in terms of representation in the work but also in how gendered expectations can influence professional interactions. I felt supported in my identity throughout the process - how we can extend this support to others in the industry? – Dublin Theatre Festival, Dublin, Ireland

Out of sight, out of mind. Perhaps this is the philosophy behind the so-called gender-neutral approach, which seems to create positive circumstances in some places:

Inspired by the gender-neutral approach, the team worked without traditional hierarchies, where gender played no role in the distribution of power or responsibilities. This egalitarian structure fostered a more inclusive and dynamic creative process, offering a powerful model for future collaborations. – Visavi Gorizia Dance Festival, Gorizia, Italy

When circumstances do not satisfy the observer, the crucial role and responsibility of the school is mentioned as an important prerequisite for the realisation of gender equality:

The changes have to be made in education for girls to feel comfortable to play, jam, participate in bands without judgement, for them to have safe environment to make music. – Sõru Jazz, Lemmaku küla, Estonia



©Usedom Music Festival

When considering inclusivity, well-being and gender equality together (topics most closely related to social sensitivity), it is dance festivals and those with storytelling/spoken word, that address these topics in large numbers and in various combinations.

10. New Business Models

Arts festivals are evolving to adopt innovative business models that respond to the shifting cultural, technological, and economic landscapes. Traditionally, these festivals relied on ticket sales, sponsorships, and public funding. However, contemporary festivals are diversifying their revenue streams and value propositions to remain sustainable and relevant.

In essence, arts festivals are reimagining themselves as multi-faceted cultural enterprises, blending creativity with entrepreneurial innovation to address the demands of a digitally connected and socially conscious audience.

The importance of innovative business solutions for arts festivals is notoriously underestimated by EFFEFA participants. The only relevant exercise compared the business models of the two partner festivals:

At the Improv Fest Ireland, people interested in participating as players in an improv performance can register individually. Tickets are sold for different timeslots of the day, in each slot, the audience can see five or six short performances by these groups. At Esportaneo, only professional troupes perform, and there are two shows scheduled for each day. – Itt és Most Társulat, Budapest, Hungary

Looking at the issues of a technical nature, namely meaningful planning, the relationship between programmer and artist, and business models, one comes to a predictable conclusion: festivals of digital art, architecture, film and applied art are best placed to address these issues in various combinations, as are residencies with a Nordic leading festival.

Conclusion

The cohabitation and collaboration between festival organisers and emerging artists was once again conducive to a meaningful exploration of various aspects of arts festival operations; ten themes related to the shared responsibility of these two professional classes towards society and the world. The residency reports present examples where the core of the sustainability themes has been put into practice in particularly creative ways. The reports reflect the lessons learned from approaching the different themes in the context of the collaboration. Most of the formulations of the excerpts confirm that the parties: festival directors and emerging artists had already been linked to the selected themes but welcomed a deeper engagement with them.

In most cases, the collaboration took place among like-minded people despite their different positions. It is the importance of the diversity of frameworks that has often come to the fore. This calls for continued efforts to harmonise the circumstances – legal provisions and political priorities – in which artists and festivals operate in Europe. Whilst solutions are not ready-made, opportunities such as the EFFEAs residencies are eminently appropriate to raise awareness of the main challenges and possible answers.



©Trengo Festival_Luis Montero

Credits

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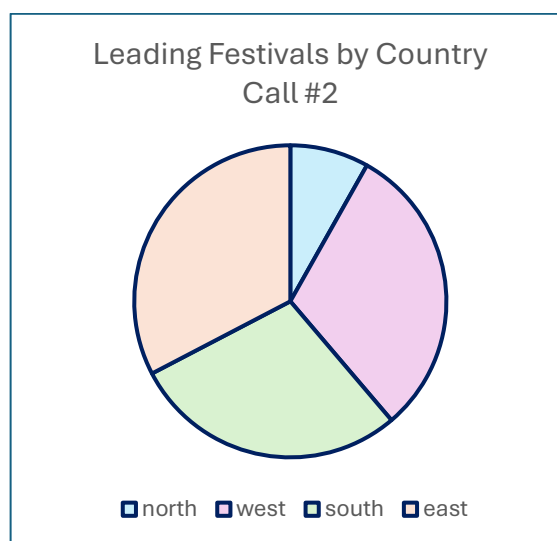
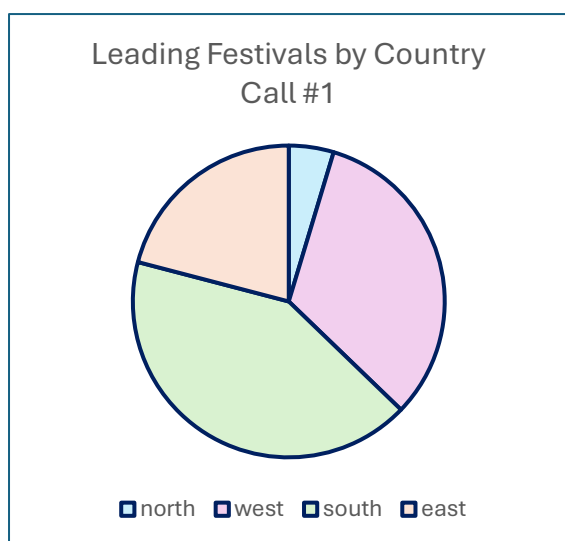
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Annex

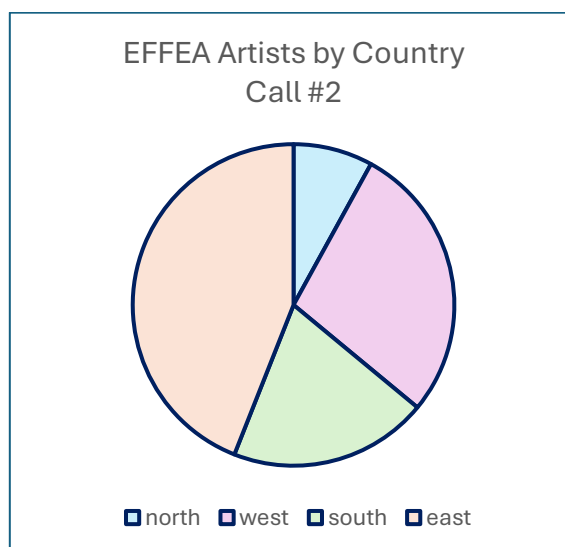
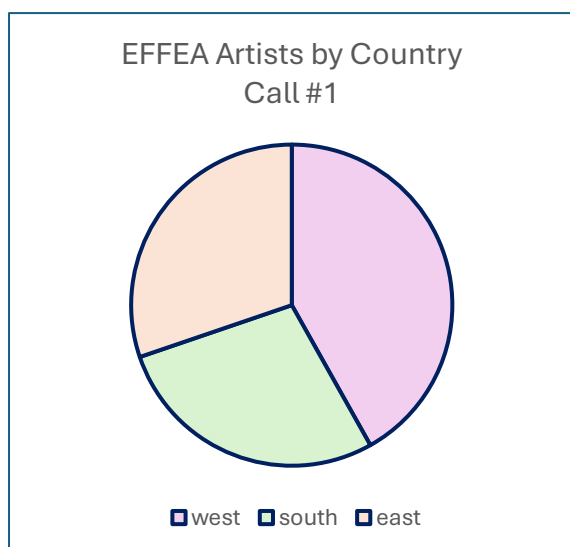
Comparisons of EFFEA Generations #1 and #2

EFFEA's first round of grants supported 142 festivals and 43 individual and collective artists from 16 disciplines and 34 countries. The residencies were held between 1 February and 31 December 2023 (Generation #1). The second round of EFFEA grants supported 170 festivals and 49 individual and collective artists from 14 artistic disciplines and 36 countries. The residency programme ran from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 (Generation #2).

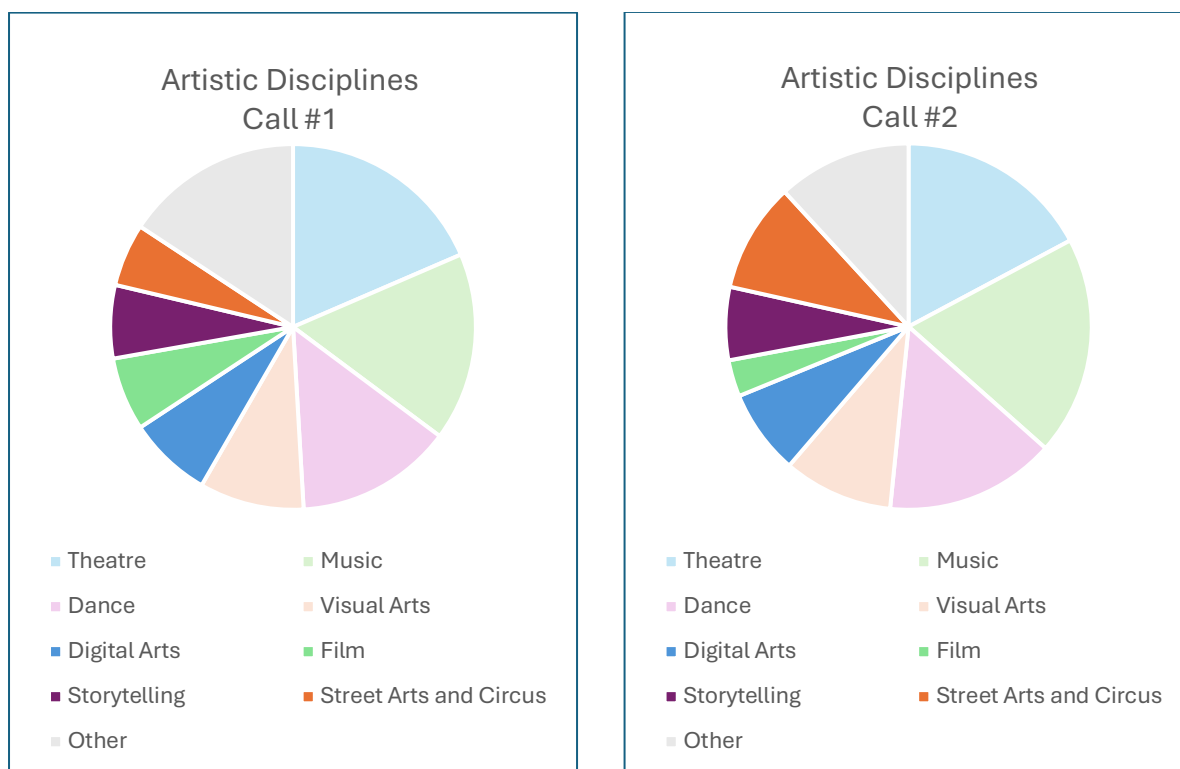
The composition of the residency programmes by country of the leading festival shows that Generation #1 was dominated by festivals from the South (ten leading festivals from Italy alone), while the call for Generation #2 has resulted in a more balanced geographical distribution.



Conversely, in terms of the nationality of the resident artists, Generation #2 shows a tendency in favour of artists from the eastern part of the continent, which corresponds to the degree of imbalance along the countries in #1.



The following diagrams show the composition of artistic genres featured at the leading festivals in the two rounds of the EFFE calls. The comparison indicates a high degree of consistency in this regard. The only small difference is a certain advance of the digital arts at the expense of film at festivals.



There were important differences between the two groups of residencies in terms of the selected thematic areas. While *Fair Remuneration and Working Conditions of the Artist* was the preferred theme in the first call, in the second EFFE round the residencies distributed their attention fairly evenly between this theme, as well as *New Power Relations* and *Meaningful Planning*, followed by the remaining themes.