



## LABFORCULTURE.ORG: AN ONLINE TOOL TO SUPPORT CULTURAL COOPERATION ACROSS EUROPE

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### What is LabforCulture?

LabforCulture develops innovative approaches, tools and technologies to strengthen, stimulate and facilitate cultural collaborations across geographic, cultural and imaginative borders. We work with and for artists, arts and culture organisations and networks, cultural professionals, and audiences in the 48 countries of Europe and between Europe and the rest of the world. Our mission is to both ensure that all those working on cultural collaborations have access to up-to-the-minute information and to encourage the cultural sector to become more experimental with online technologies.

Initiated by the [European Cultural Foundation \(ECF\)](#) and jointly developed and supported by many of Europe's leading cultural organisations, LabforCulture offers a wealth of essential information, debate and research – including all the latest news, vital funding tips, blogs and a vast searchable database of cultural organisations operating from Rome to Reykjavík. [www.labforculture.org](http://www.labforculture.org): launched in June 2006 in English, French, German, Spanish and Polish.

LabforCulture engages in a range of online and offline activities with a variety of partners and content contributors across Europe. We provide:

1. **information, research and analysis** related to cultural cooperation and collaboration, including funding opportunities, critical perspectives, research, news, and contacts (organisations and networks).
2. **online networking tools** to enable and strengthen the capacity for cultural collaboration within the cultural sector.
3. **promotion** of the players engaged in cultural cooperation and their activities across Europe and beyond.
4. **spaces** for connections, exchanges and knowledge sharing between organisations and individuals.
5. **platforms** for discussion and discourse on current issues affecting the cultural sector.

### Who uses LabforCulture?

LabforCulture provides services to artists, cultural managers, producers, programmers, researchers and policy makers. A quick scan through the growing number of user profiles on the website indicates usage from a wide range of professional perspectives. Visit LabforCulture and meet people such as: the founder of a cultural foundation in Lithuania, a popular culture researcher in Istanbul, an arts management teacher in Bulgaria, a sculptor in



Turin, the producer of an international cabaret festival in Poland, a critic in Dublin or a curator in Barcelona.

Every three months, LabforCulture presents a new '*Research in focus*' [http://www.labforculture.org/en/resources/research\\_in\\_focus](http://www.labforculture.org/en/resources/research_in_focus). This section provides access to research resources on issues that are currently being debated in Europe and features links to a selection of studies, reports, books, documents and articles of interest from different countries and using different methodologies.

### **Current research project:**

In the context of LabforCulture's experience in developing its own online community space, as well as feedback received during a series of workshops we have conducted across Europe (Lisbon, Stockholm, Istanbul, Moscow etc.), we have identified a need for an in-depth research mapping to give an overview of how the cultural sector is (or is not) taking up the use of online tools for collaboration. Despite the fact that operators in the media art field have been actively using, pushing the limits of and contributing to the discourse around the cultural uses of technology for several decades, there is an enormous amount of work, training, and knowledge exchange to be undertaken in the rest of the cultural sector to foster a better understanding of the latest socio-technological movements and developments. The lack of knowledge, as well as challenges expressed in relation to the use of the technologies, have wide ranging implications for the sector, from policy to practice to audience development. What are the stumbling blocks for the cultural sector? How can we work towards a more fluid process of cultural exchange and collaboration online in Europe? How can the more traditional cultural communities link up more fluidly with the latest developments and communities online?

### **LabforCulture supporters:**

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- Compagnia di San Paolo, Italy
- Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage
- The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation
- Norwegian Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs
- Cypriot Ministry of Education and Culture
- Fritt Ord Foundation, Norway
- Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Portugal
- Luxembourg Ministry of Culture
- Spanish Ministry of Culture