

Infoday Networks CCP Spain – Belgian network experience

Best practice: **The European Festivals Association – EU funding Strand 2**

<http://www.efa-aeef.eu/efa60/en/page/Video%20Gallery/view/24/>

EFA is the representative network of relevant music, dance, theatre, interdisciplinary festivals, national festival associations and cultural networks in 42 countries, promoting Europe as a cultural project across borders since 60 years, including several Spanish cultural organisations, e.g.:

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- Festival de Música de Canarias
 - Cantonigròs International Music Festival
 - Semana de Música Religiosa
 - Festival Internacional de Música y Danza de Granada
 - Festival Internacional de Música Castell de Peralada
 - Festival Internacional de Santander
 - Spanish Association of Classical Music Festivals
 - Festival de Músiques de Torroella de Montgrí
 - Festival Internacional de Música y Danza 'Ciudad de Úbeda'

EFA's aims include social and cultural aims + mission to promote & advocate the local and global significance of arts festivals and their important role in European cultural cooperation.

The EU values to enhance diversity of the arts, innovation, mobility of the accessibility, integration, European citizenship and intercultural dialogue are promoted through networking activities, publications, researches, contribution to policy debates at different levels, flagship projects in training, expertise and advocacy.

EFA activities supported by EU, include:

- Artistic co-production and networking opportunities (General Assemblies meeting)
- Communication activities
- Special advocacy and awareness raising activities: FestLab for Creativity and Innovation; Arts Festivals' Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue, etc.
- EFA BOOKS series
- EFA training programme: Atelier for Young Festival Managers

EFA believes in creating synergies. Thanks to EU support EFA collaborates actively with various colleague networks, e.g.:

- National festival associations
- EFA in EU Platform on Access to Culture
- EFA initiator Atelier for Young Festival Managers
- Round tables with politicians
- Partner in network 'A Soul for Europe'
- Initiator of the European House for Culture- Brussels

EFA's Director, Kathrin Deventer on "Three circles of cultural network tasks":

1. Members: the internal debate

Networks are there to make the work of their members better. They are established around a certain discipline for members to meet, discuss, reinforce, be in an international environment, professionalize, communicate, exchange best practices, initiate projects = inner educational task of a network.

2. Arts: the cultural debate

Networks are there to make the world of the arts better within the artistic reality. Networks have to mobilize the sector; they are important for cultural development and for safeguarding the improvement of the arts sectors' conditions.

3. Politics: the political debate

Networks are there to have a position in a wider political context in Europe, not only a sectorial one, but a wider political one. Networks have a task to underline the role of culture in society as such and to help bringing the cultural dimension on all political agendas.

EFA's approach as a network and its initiatives are characterized by a European dimension:

- All festivals promote their value for an intercultural society of mutual understanding.
- EFA stimulates active participation through structural communication, training and best-practice exchange.
- EFA represents festivals powerfully at political level, bringing the expertise to decision makers at various levels.
- EFA's biannual Atelier for Young Festival Managers offers the next generation from all over Europe a platform for development, peer to peer learning and intercultural knowledge sharing with artistic directors from all over Europe.
- EFA supports the extensive sharing of knowledge online, best practices on thematic themes linked to the European Years, international festival programmes and policies that bring the expertise from top to down and back to the EU.
- EFA's policy to provide membership services on in-depth data on artistic programmes, European funding, etc. allows a targeted participation of members in the activities.
- EFA broadly distributes many print publications (EFA BOOKS) on European issues that generate further discussion.

To highlight festivals' wider societal role, EFA continues to invest and to capitalise on festivals' power of awareness raising - involving members and their audience into broader European reflection, in particular through the focus of EFA's 60th anniversary in 2012.

Through EFA's role as an advocacy network (member of EU Platforms on Intercultural Dialogue, Access to Culture), results are multiplied through participation in other networks.

Bringing expertise to other fora and the political debate, EFA contributes to the shaping of the Agenda for Culture, making it relevant also at local level.

The ultimate goal is to engage as many arts festivals in Europe and beyond in implementing and promoting the aims of a cultural Europe.

EFA, EU funding and the Culture Contact Point

EFA has been receiving EU Funding since 2006 under Strand 2.

It allows the network to establish a true European work plan on behalf of its members, beyond serving members merely: it has been allowing setting up training programmes, publications, advocacy campaigns, not only for members, but in the frame of the overall sectorial work. It allows a network to develop this programme on its own.

Although there is a direct line to the Executive Agency based in Brussels, the contact with the Cultural Contact Point has been very important, especially in questions such as:

- Technical management of the EU grant
- Advanced information about the setting of priorities of the Culture Programme
- Members' questions referred to the Cultural Contact Point

Networks

INTERNAL MOTIVES

1. Better Access to resources
2. Learning: cross-fertilization of creative ideas : transcending the sum of parts: $1 + 1 = 3$.
3. Sharing risks: realize goals that could not be accomplished individually.
4. Efficiency and effectiveness Time and cost saving items, visibility,...
5. Strengthening one's own market position

EXTERNAL MOTIVES

1. Pursuit of continuity – sustainability in the complex and vulnerable society.
2. Subsidies

IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVES: Collaborative empowerment of common interests; voice heard in policy.

COORDINATING A NETWORK : ORGANISATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Careful selection of partners with same/complementary skills and commitment
- Well-defined & clearly communicated common mission and common objectives
- Free up adequate time for general strategy, general policy and management, for the follow up and monitoring of the resources that support the collaboration.
- Make sure that participating organisations allocate sufficient time for their commitment in network (rather than networking tasks being placed back)
- Diversity and equality of partners is critical to networks:
 - pay attention to the different cultures and decision making authorities.
 - Make sure that collaboration between Eastern & Central EU Member States ensure that all partners obtain a place on the map of a unified EU continent.
- Avoid inadequate or irregular financing of networks, in order not to degenerate into non-working organizations with lack of time and possibilities.
- Results generated by a network are often difficult to see/measure. Make sure that the network remains visible + show all benefits resulting from Europe's support!
- Leadership: create efficient coordination within a context that stimulates equality and collaboration. Leaders must limit complexity and ambiguity. To this end, it is important that they –in the first place- have insight into the expectations and objectives of all partners. Moreover, they must ensure continuous communication in these areas.

Tips with regards to Strand 2 Advocacy Networks application:

- TAKE YOUR TIME to get familiar with - and prepare (min 2 months)
- Read attentively Programme guide + study the specific strand-related conditions & objectives
- Check and talk to successful applicants; look into past applications
- TAKE YOUR TIME to prepare the application
- Write your action plan and summary accordingly and in time
- Think about how your network activities:
 - are a real added EU value, worth the EU funding? What gives your network this specific European dimension? The EU added value inherently has to be seen through the structure, goals, targeted audience, outreach, impact, partnerships, etc.?
 - Encourage exchange & mobility and thus contribute to a common cultural area for all EU Citizens?
 - Build bridges between ethnic, social... communities and encourage dialogue?
 - Stimulate access to own culture and neighbouring cultures?
 - Create a feeling of shared community with respect for diversity?
 - can attract new target groups? Explain the expected/possible impact on audiences.
 - prove synergy with EU objectives; EU Year themes and wider EU philosophy?
 - can be communicated (communication tools/media/audiences/countries/numbers)
 - can be diversified thanks to the grant (= financial sustainability)?
 - can be evaluated and monitored?
 - can improve ownership of activities, partnerships, (lasting) involvement of local and regional authorities, capacity building, professionalization, etc?

- Write in a clear, well-structured way in FLUENT English, French or German – reader friendly: concrete, coherent, realistic and focused
- Aims according to activities according to expenses according to income
- Summary = cluster of the detailed activities WHAT_WHO_WHERE_HOW_WHEN
- Budget form: start vice versa with the detailed activity plan and be as precise as possible (dates, places, costs, audiences, etc)
- Use the official wording and formats

TOOLS:

- Programme guide, instructions for applicants, list of successful projects
- EU information days, network moments
- Contact your CCP to help you with the feedback on your application preparation
- Share your experiences with CCP and the European Commission to the benefit of all.
- Subscribe to CCP newsletter
- Check website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.php regularly

Thank you for your attention

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