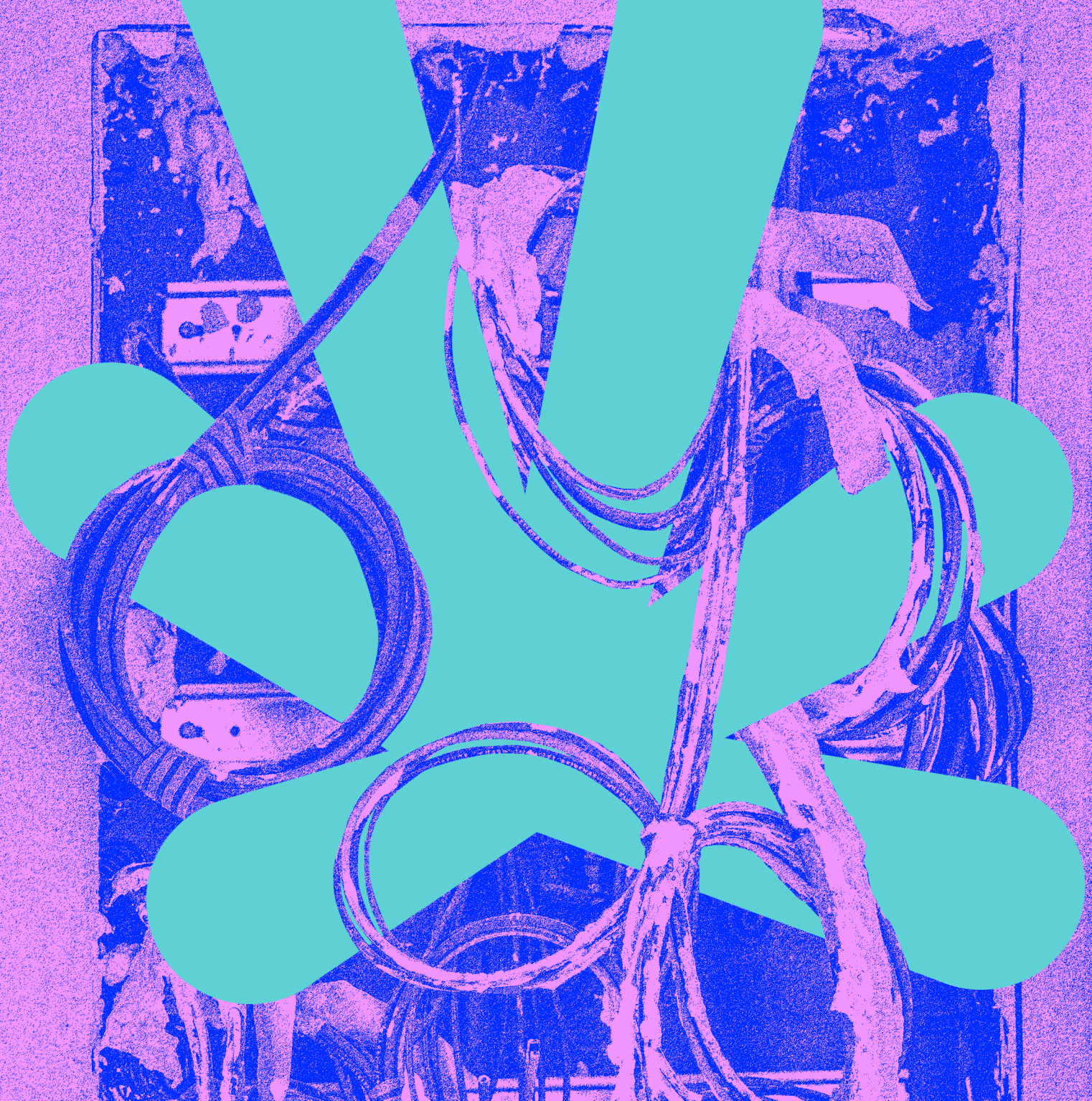
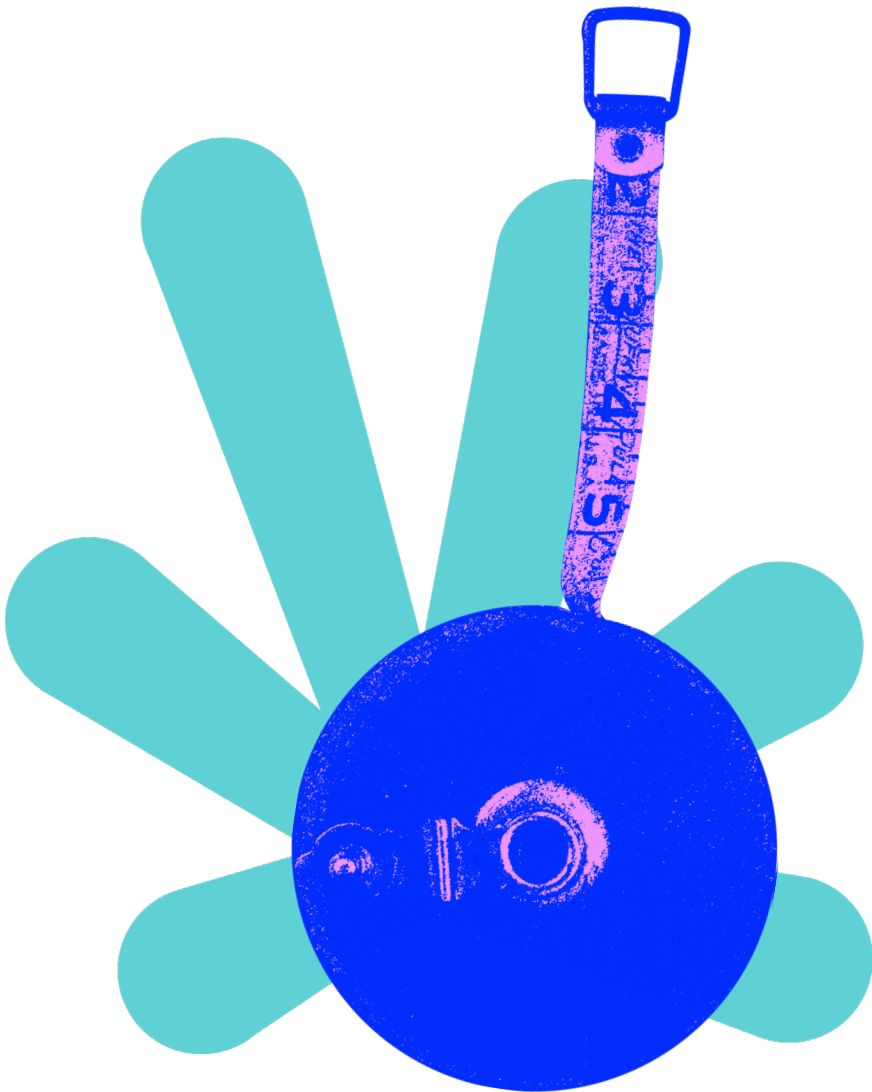


Duct Tape And Dreams

2024 MENTORSHIP PROGRAM REPORT





Duct Tape and Dreams

Tailored Mentorship Programme for Young Creative Collectives



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Abstract

This report seeks to establish a framework illustrating the journey of four emerging cultural initiatives participation in TEH's 2024 duct tape and dream mentorship program. In 2024, the mentorship program focused on grassroots centres in former European Capital Cities of Culture (ECoC) and ECoC candidate cities. The document comprehensively explores the essential elements of the mentorship program, detailing activities, highlighting challenges, and explaining the valuable learning outcomes achieved by the participants.

Executive Summary: Overview

Leveraging 40 years of experiential wisdom, we recognize that managing a space dedicated to art and culture can be a formidable undertaking. The transition from conceptualization to implementation is often a complex and challenging journey, particularly during the initial years. The passion and vision of young creatives frequently collide with harsh realities and bureaucratic hustles. In response to these challenges, TEH since 2018, took proactive steps by establishing a hands-on mentoring and capacity-building program tailored for emerging artistic collectives. This program embarks young and dedicated creatives on several months of developmental journey, equipping them with essential tools and expertise needed to construct a sustainable future within the independent cultural sector. Guided by seasoned mentors, the program serves as a comprehensive roadmap for navigating the exhilarating yet demanding early years, aiming to secure a more sustainable future for emerging cultural centres. In 2023, the program was rebaptised and rebranded with the introduction of the Philippe Grombeer award to one lucky participant.

Who we are

Trans Europe Halles is a member-led international non-governmental organisation born on 6 March 1983 and currently based in Lund, Sweden. We are a bottom-up value driven activist network of grassroots cultural centres in 40+ countries across and beyond Europe and currently unit 170+ members. We have two categories of members - Full members and Associates - who work towards the sustainable transformation of buildings, neighbourhoods and cities through arts, culture, and citizen participation. As an international member-led activist network, our goals and objectives are to continue being a place for learning and exchange, a platform to campaign, advocate and raise awareness. Moreover, we are an accumulator of collective knowledge and interdisciplinary expertise in fields such as cultural production, advocacy, city planning, sustainable architecture and circular design, energy efficiency, community engagement, fundraising, creative industries, policy, social innovation.



Brief description of program participants

Žižkárna

Location

České Budějovice, Czech Republic

Vision

The vision of Žižkárna is to create a cultural oasis in the city centre of České Budějovice. A place where all participants of culture can find a home. A place where citizens can go to relax, play sports or get inspired. A place that connects generations, industries, professionals, and amateurs. A place where everyone can realize their potential and fulfil their dreams.

Žižkárna is a vibrant cultural space located in the historic old barracks of České Budějovice. The organization provides a platform for diverse performers and underrepresented genres while supporting local bands through regular music evenings. Žižkárna's efforts breathe new life into the area by celebrating its historical roots and adding a modern, colorful dimension. Dedicated to connecting communities, particularly neighbors and young people, Žižkárna fosters inclusivity through a varied program that extends beyond music. Their events include theatre performances, farmers' markets, themed days, and beer festivals, making it a cultural hub for the region.

Cultterra

Location

Eleusis, Greece

Vision

Cultterra dreams of a city that offers cultural events open to all—local community and visitors alike—starting from small neighborhoods and extending to the international level. Cultterra is a cultural initiative committed to creating inclusive and accessible cultural experiences. By focusing on both local and international connections, the organization fosters collaboration and a sense of belonging across diverse groups.

Its mission centers on strengthening community ties through neighborhood-focused events while integrating global perspectives. By hosting both intimate gatherings and large-scale cultural programs, Cultterra ensures inclusivity for all participants, regardless of background. This approach inspires creativity and unity, transforming cultural participation into a shared, enriching experience.

Fukušima

Location

Riga, Latvia

Vision

Riga, the cultural hub of Latvia, is celebrated for its artistic spirit and historical charm. However, grassroots venues like Fukušima face challenges such as limited funding opportunities and minimal governmental support for independent initiatives. These constraints make Fukušima's innovative programming and strong community engagement vital to its success and sustainability.

Founded in 2014, Fukušima began as a personal initiative by three founders passionate about sustainable living, permaculture, and community building. Today, it is managed by one founder who has taken full responsibility for its mission and activities. Fukušima's mission is to provide a safe, inclusive space for cultural and community events, and to promote ecological awareness and sustainability within urban environments. Its core activities include hosting cultural events, including music performances, workshops, and film screenings. Additionally, Fukušima is on a mission to create spaces for marginalized groups to connect and build community. Promoting ecological practices such as urban renewal, composting, and waste reduction.

CreateCulture Space

Location

Vilnius, Lithuania

Vision

Located in Vilnius, Lithuania's historic and vibrant capital, CreateCulture Space operates in a city celebrated for its progressive cultural initiatives. As a post-Soviet state integrated into the European Union, Lithuania has become a refuge for individuals displaced by political and social upheavals, particularly Belarusians fleeing repression under the Lukashenko regime.

CreateCulture Space serves as a collaborative hub for artists and cultural actors from Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine, and beyond. The organization is dedicated to fostering creativity, inclusion, and grassroots civil activism. CreateCulture Space is a key supporter of Belarusian artists and activists, offering: a safe space for artistic expression and collaboration, practical support for overcoming logistical and political challenges, and programs that amplify marginalized voices and promote inclusivity.

Program Design and Structure

In November 2023, the mentorship open call was released and lasted until February 2024. The selection of participants for the 2024 mentorship program was done in February by the selection committee comprising of the president and an ambassador of TEH network, the two mentors, and a representative from Les Halles Schaerbeek. Beginning with an initial online introduction meeting organised by the program coordinator, the two mentors were strategically paired with two emerging cultural centers each. This meeting served as a platform for the representatives of the centers to familiarize themselves with the mentors. The matching process leveraged the mentors' experience to align them with the centers that stood to gain the most from their guidance. Subsequently, the entire program was tailored to align with these mentor-center pairings, ensuring a customized and effective approach to the mentorship journey.

November 2023 _____ Open application

February/March 2024 _____ Selection of participating centres, online kick off meeting.

April-September 2024 _____ Online mentorship + physical visits from mentees to mentors and vice versa.

May 2024 _____ Mentees attended TEH conference, presented their work to the network & extra in-person session with mentors in Tartu, Estonia

October 2024 _____ Philippe Grombeer award ceremony presented to Cultterra at TEH camp meeting Thessaloniki, Greece & official end of mentorship program.

Description of Mentors

Elefterios Kechagioglou



is the director of TEH member *Le Plus Petit Cirque du Monde Centre Culturel de Rencontre* (since 2007). He is an expert on artistic, cultural and urban policies in disadvantaged areas, European programs and intercultural dialogue. He studied Political Science and Contemporary History in Institut d'Etudes Politiques of Paris (Master 2), specialized in European studies and collaborated with UNESCO. From there, he started a career in circus, theatre and writing, working as an artist, trainer and stage director. He also worked with several theatres, circus schools, professional companies and public administration (Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs). During the last 15 years, he has been developing several artistic projects focusing on their social impact.

Kaspars Kondratjuks

Kaspars Kondratjuks is a professional in the cultural and creative sector, with a rich background in event management and IT. He has been a board member of the NGO *Kaņepes Contemporary Culture Centre* since 2019, providing affordable cultural programs, and the NGO *Festivāls Komēta* since 2016, promoting social development through culture and informal educational methods. He also served as the Managing Director of *Kaņepes Kultūras centrs* in Riga - a bar, and event venue. His experience in IT includes roles as a System Administrator and Project Manager. In addition, Kaspars has a history as a DJ, having performed at the notable *Essential Club Riga* and created electronic music programs on local radios. Kaspars' diverse experience and passion for culture make him an ideal candidate for the *Duct Tape* and *Dream* mentorship program



Mentorship: Program activities

To kick off the mentoring program on a strong foundation, the mentors conducted a needs analysis to set the direction for the mentorship. This process helped the mentors identify the specific challenges and needs of each mentee's center. With this understanding, they were able to design tailored mentoring to address these challenges and needs effectively during the mentoring sessions.

Based on the needs assessment, the mentors identified the following challenges and needs for each centre:

Fukušima

Challenges _____

- Seasonal income dependency
- Limited capacity and staffing
- Limited legal status resulting to restricted access to funding and partnerships
- Disadvantaged geographical location leading to isolation & lack of engagement.
- Lack of infrastructure in venue

Needs _____

- Registration and legalization of the NGO
- Develop a financial model that supports off-season operations
- Engage with the local community through collaborative events, workshops, and open days
- Improve infrastructure to support programming.
- Build stronger partnerships with universities, ecological organizations, and international cultural networks

CreateCulture Space

Challenges _____

- Unable to generate income through renting out space due to NGO funding rules
- Reliance on a single donor creates long-term sustainability risks
- Operates in exile, as the team fled Belarus due to persecution for civil activism

Needs _____

- Develop a sustainable funding strategy, potentially exploring social entrepreneurship
- Strengthen partnerships with local stakeholders in Vilnius to expand their audience base
- Increase team capacity through funding and professional development opportunities
- Secure outdoor space to enhance programming flexibility

Culterra

Challenges _____

- Lack of space
- Lack of financial resources
- Lack of recognition & reputation of the team among locals, except for young stake & LGBTQ+ community
- Complication with national funding & sponsorship
- Limited support from city
- Security & health issues
- Lack of time for members & volunteers due to other pressing responsibilities
- Small team with big responsibilities
- Insufficient training of members in the cultural field
- Limited audience attraction

Needs _____

- Secure a permanent space
- Develop long term financial plan & funding opportunities
- Attract & increase active members of the association
- Collaboration with local organizations
- Cultural training
- Communication with municipality & public bodies.
- Active participation in European networks
- Remaining relevant now & in the future

Žižkarna

Challenges _____

- Volunteer based core team
- Lack of proper financial & strategic planning
- Find the right approach to handle fragmented target groups
- Uncertainty regarding contract of building
- Small team with big responsibility
- How to become part of ECoC program
- Irregular opening hours
- Sustainability of the centre

Needs _____

- Possibility of having at least one full time contract for one team member
- How to create a financial plan that fits the centre
- How to draft long term strategic plan for the centre
- How to negotiate with municipality for long term lease contract
- Access to grants in the Czech Republic
- Cooperation partnership with local organisations
- Smart use of & reclaim of outdoor space
- How to develop programs in advance

Activity Description

Following the needs analysis conducted at the start of the mentorship, subsequent sessions focused on addressing the identified challenges and needs.

Žižkarna

SWOT Analysis

The mentor and mentees updated the Centre's SWOT analysis, mapping strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This provided a clear understanding of the Centre's current state and highlighted the need to create a secure environment to prevent potential lease cancellations by the municipality.



Human Resources

The needs analysis revealed that the current team of 5 core members and 8 temporary staff is insufficient for the large space. The team began identifying and reaching out to potential new members to strengthen their capacity

Budget Analysis

A review of budgets over the past three



Potential Cooperation

One session focused on analyzing local cultural and non-cultural organizations for collaboration. The team identified new potential partners, explored ways to deepen existing partnerships, and met with organizations in person to discuss realistic opportunities.

years showed that operating at a volunteer level is unsustainable. A new business plan with a three-year financial outlook is being developed to stabilize finances and introduce regular salaries for some team members.

Creating a Brochure

The team designed a brochure summarizing the Centre's activities and opportunities, with input from the mentor. It has been a valuable tool for engaging potential partners.

Financial Plan

A flexible financial plan with a three-year outlook is being developed, offering clarity on income and expenses. This plan will help the Centre prepare for financial fluctuations and move toward stability.

Mentor Visit in České Budějovice

In May 2024, the mentor visited Žižkárna for a two-day program that included meetings with the ECoC2028 team and local representatives. The visit also



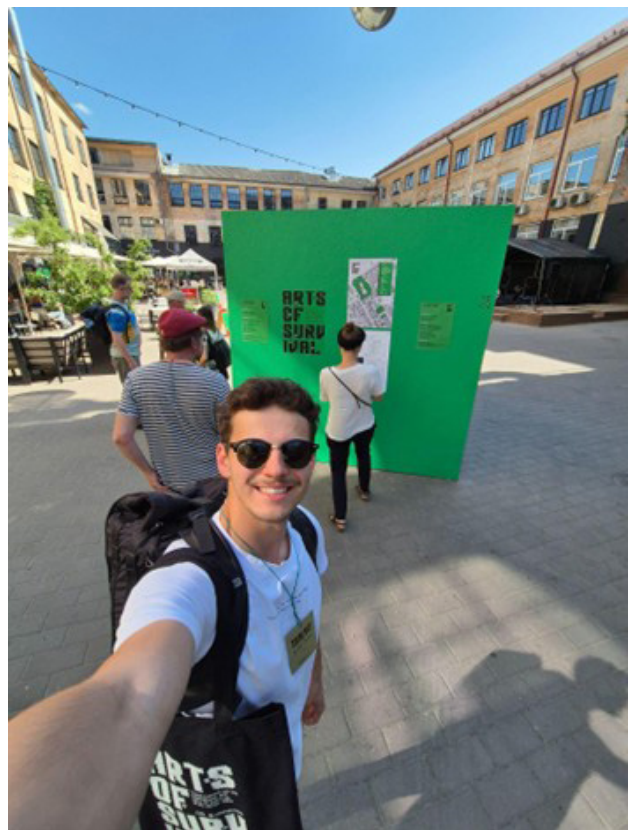
involved evaluating the centre's premises, strengthening the core team, and identifying areas for improvement, offering valuable insights for the future

Mentees visit to PPCM in Paris

In July, the mentees visited the mentor's center in Paris along with another mentee centre, Culterra. The visit provided behind-the-scenes insights, inspiration, and opportunities for collaboration and mutual learning.

TEH Conference in Tartu

Attending the TEH conference in Tartu was an enriching experience. The mentees connected with other European and Czech centers, explored collaboration opportunities, and participated in workshops and discussions on cultural diversity. Presenting their center alongside other participants was particularly inspiring and motivating.



Cultterra

Meetings with Local Officials _____

During the mentoring, key meetings were held with the Deputy Regional Governor, Deputy Mayor of Infrastructure, Municipal General Secretary, and Mayor. These discussions focused on strengthening collaboration and developing strategies to support the team's initiatives within the local community.



Legal Establishment and Statutes _____

The centres statutes were drafted and finalized, ensuring full compliance with legal requirements. This process solidified Cultterra's legal framework and operational guidelines, laying the foundation for its future activities.



Completion of the Business Plan _____

A comprehensive business plan was finalized, including detailed financial projections, market analysis, five-year strategic goals, and implementation steps. This plan provides a roadmap for Cultterra's sustainable growth and long-term impact.

Mapping Local Organizations _____

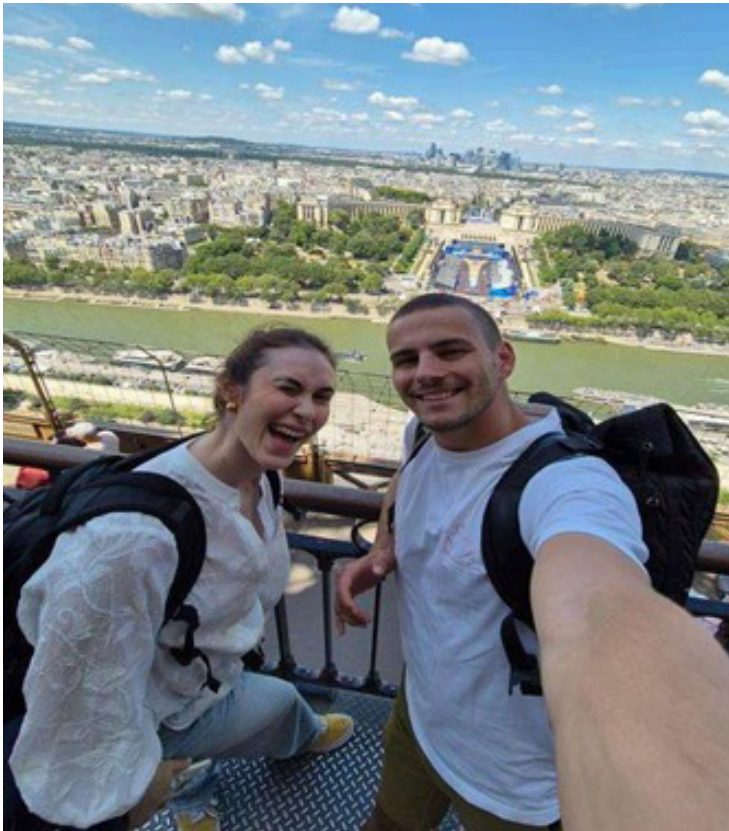
A detailed mapping of local clubs, social enterprises, sports associations, and artistic groups was conducted. This exercise aims to foster partnerships and create collaboration opportunities that align with Cultterra's mission.

Team Presentation Development

A compelling presentation was created to showcase Cultterra's mission, objectives, and achievements. This tool has been instrumental in engaging potential partners, stakeholders, and the wider community.

Member Responsibilities

Team roles and responsibilities were restructured to improve efficiency and clarify duties. This optimization enhances organizational effectiveness and ensures that every team member contributes to Cultterra's success.



Fukušima

The mentorship incorporated visits, workshops, and collaborative planning sessions that were both practical and insightful, fostering a deeper connection between the mentor and mentee teams. The close proximity of Fukušima and the mentor's venue enabled frequent in-person meetings that added a personal touch to the collaboration.

Visit to Fukušima's Venue _____

- The mentor had the opportunity to explore Fukušima's unique space, which blends industrial aesthetics with ecological initiatives.
- Observations highlighted both the venue's potential and the challenges it faces, particularly barriers to community integration due to its industrial location.
- Discussions during this visit delved into how the venue's distinctive character could be better leveraged to attract and engage the local community.



Fukušima Team Visit to Kaņepes Kultūras centrs _____

- Regular visits to KKC by the Fukušima team allowed for the exchange of ideas and experiences.
- With Gavin's familiarity with KKC and its community, these visits were informal yet productive, offering valuable insights into how a vibrant cultural hub operates.
- These visits served as an inspiration for Fukušima, showcasing the impact of strong community ties and diverse programming.



Workshops and Guidance _____

Interactive workshops and one-on-one guidance formed a crucial part of the mentorship, addressing specific challenges and opportunities for Fukušima.



Funding Strategies

A workshop was conducted on funding strategies, with a focus on exploring partnerships with ecological organizations and universities.

- Practical advice was shared on diversifying income sources and securing support for long-term sustainability.
- The importance of legal registration as an NGO was emphasized, with detailed guidance on navigating the process effectively.

Event Programming

- Insights were shared on crafting an inclusive and engaging event program to attract a wider and more diverse audience.

- Discussions explored how Fukušima could create tailored offers to encourage local collectives and independent promoters to host events at their venue.
- The session also touched on innovative ways to align event programming with the venue's ecological ethos, making it a unique draw for the community.



CreateCulture Space

The mentorship program encompassed immersive in-person visits, dynamic workshops, and ongoing discussions that facilitated learning and growth for both the mentee and mentor organizations.

Visit to CreateCulture Space (May 2–4, 2024)

The mentorship began with a visit to the CreateCulture Space, where the mentor participated in the opening of an art exhibition. The event showcased a unique approach to artist safety, with participants wearing “no-photo” signs to maintain their privacy and security.

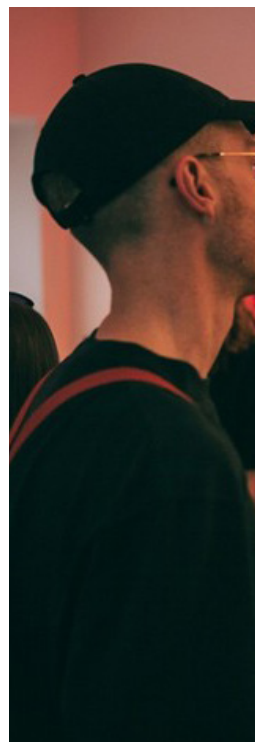
- During the visit, logistical challenges were highlighted, such as transporting delicate and small-scale artworks across borders, particularly from Belarus. These challenges prompted a collaborative discussion about creative solutions and support systems for similar situations.

of the local city deepened the mentor’s understanding of the cultural context.

CreateCulture Space Visit to KKC (April 19–21, 2024)

Later in the program, the CreateCulture team visited KKC to experience its vibrant community firsthand. The visit coincided with KKC’s anniversary celebrations, offering a unique glimpse into its diverse and engaging programming.

- The celebrations showcased how KKC effectively balances its mission with community entertainment, inspiring ideas for CreateCulture’s own programming and engagement strategies.



- The visit also served as an opportunity to strengthen personal bonds with the CreateCulture team. A guided tour of their venue provided valuable insights into its operations, while an exploration

Workshops and Guidance
Interactive workshops were a cornerstone of the mentorship, designed to address specific needs and provide tailored strategies for future growth.

Planning for New Spaces

A comprehensive workshop was conducted on planning and optimizing new cultural spaces. Key topics included:

- Refining mission and vision statements to ensure clarity and alignment with organizational goals.
- Mapping stakeholders and conducting impact analyses to identify opportunities for collaboration and growth.
- Developing sustainable business models that balance creative goals with financial viability.

Exploration of KKC's Social Enterprise Model

- The mentor presented KKC's innovative social enterprise model, which serves as a blueprint for sustainable funding.

- The CreateCulture team engaged in thoughtful discussions on how elements of this model could be adapted to their own context, including potential revenue streams and strategies for community reinvestment.

These visits, workshops, and discussions provided CreateCulture with actionable insights and strategies to strengthen its operations, enhance community engagement, and ensure long-term sustainability. The personal connections and shared experiences further enriched the mentorship, leaving a lasting impact on both organizations.



Quotes from participants & mentors

“An outside view from someone who has so much experience allowed us to see details that are invisible to us, but which are very important.”
(Žižkárna)

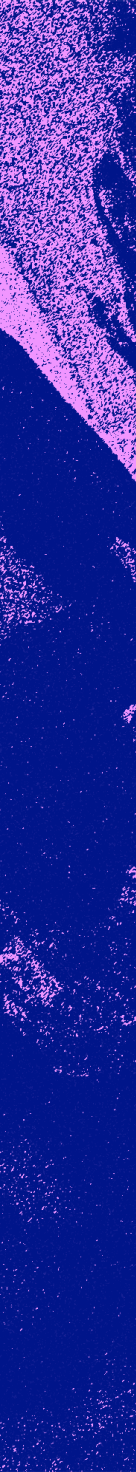
“It’s incredibly inspiring to witness their bravery and resilience in creating a cultural hub despite political exile.”
(Mentor referring to CreateCulture Space)

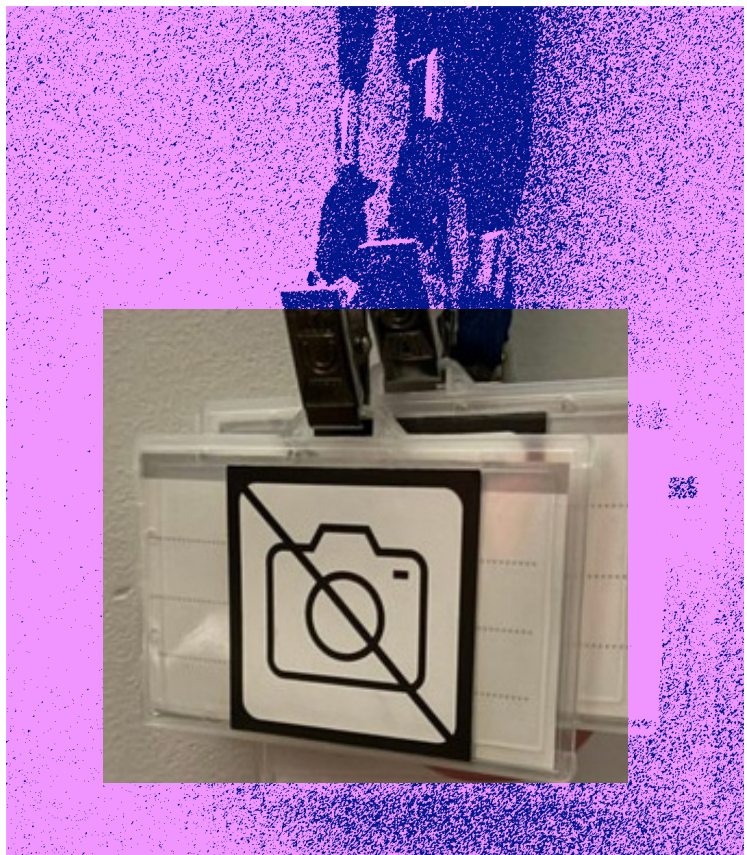
“We want to inspire ecological awareness in an urban setting, showing that sustainability is possible, even in small steps.”
(Fukušima)

“Cultterra is driven by powerful and social engaged young women and members of the LGBTQI+ local community. Who will dare to be an obstacle to this deep transformation of the Greek society?”
(Mentor)

“Throughout the entire process, I felt as though we were constantly facing obstacles and challenges. But with the inner belief that we could overcome them, we did.”
(Cultterra)

“Every event we host is a reminder that art and culture can thrive even in the most difficult circumstances.”
(CreateCulture Space)





Learning Outcomes

The mentorship program offered valuable insights and strategies to Žižkárna, CreateCulture Space, Culterra, and Fukušima, empowering them to strengthen operations, enhance collaborations, and achieve sustainable growth. This transformative experience provided practical solutions tailored to their unique needs while fostering a shared vision for the future. Key areas of learning and next steps for the future are summarized in the table below.

Žižkárna

Learning outcomes _____

- Gained clarity on strengths, weaknesses, and areas for growth
- Improved strategies for fostering and strengthening collaborations
- Developed a sustainable long-term funding and financial plan
- Aligned venue usage and activities with organisational goals
- Enhanced understanding of team dynamics for improved collaboration
- Deepened engagement with the European Capital of Culture 2028 team
- Created impactful resources to communicate our mission effectively

Next steps _____

- Integrate Žižkárna into the official European Capital of Culture program and expand international partnerships
- Position Žižkárna as a leading alternative cultural and creative centre in the city
- Develop Žižkárna as a vibrant space for young people
- Strengthen ties with other organisations and identified key strategic partners
- Professionalise and stabilise the core team for efficient operations
- Work towards joining Czech or European networks of similar organisations.
- Focus on achieving consistent and sustainable daily operations

Fukušima

Learning outcomes _____

- Refined missions to integrate sustainability with community engagement
- Initiated legal registration processes to unlock grant opportunities
- Developed strategies to diversify programming and reach wider audiences

Next steps _____

- Complete the formal registration process of the NGO to access funding opportunities
- Foster stronger ties with the local community through joint events and initiatives
- Focus on small-scale upgrades like outdoor spaces and solar panel installations
- Build deeper connections within Riga's cultural sector and European cultural networks

Cultterra

Learning outcomes _____

- Gained skills in preparing and presenting a comprehensive group overview
- Developed a solid business and financial plan
- Learned to map and address needs and challenges within the team and in Elefsina
- Established clear team roles and responsibilities for improved efficiency
- Completed the legal establishment process, officially becoming an association
- Built relationships with key local authorities, presenting our team's work and vision
- Addressed key issues, including immigrant housing and building usage in Elefsina

Next steps _____

- Cultterra is dedicated to enhancing local communities through culture, art, and sports.
- Aims to build and solidify partnerships with various organizations and clubs
- Plans to join Greek, international, and European networking groups for broader collaboration
- Expanding initiatives like the LGBTQ+ festival to promote inclusivity and diversity
- Aspires to establish a canteen at Arkopolis, supporting financial sustainability and revitalizing the area

CreateCulture Space

Learning outcomes _____

- Clarified mission and impact, establishing a basis for strategic planning
- Explored social enterprise models for sustainable growth
- Acquired skills in stakeholder mapping and business model development
- Addressed key issues, including immigrant housing and building usage in Elefsina

Next steps _____

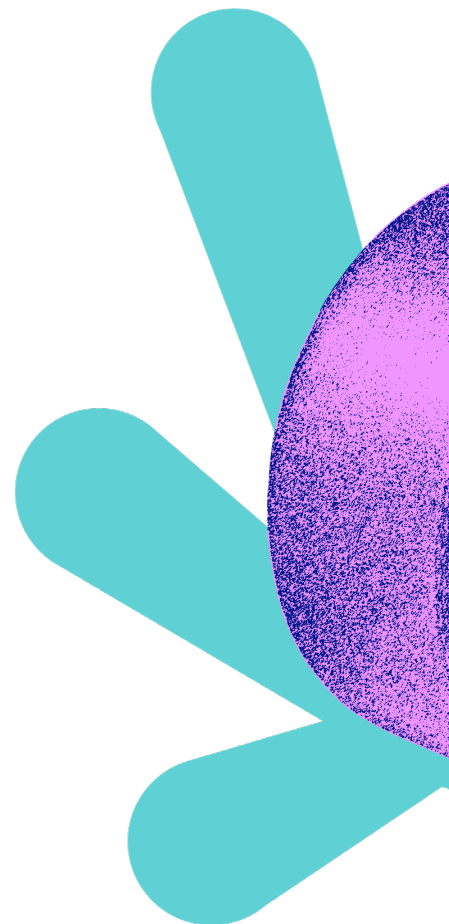
- Partner with local stakeholders to diversify audience reach and secure diverse funding
- Plan for the acquisition or creation of outdoor programming areas
- Enhance income streams by expanding professional multimedia services
- Strengthen team capabilities through focused funding initiatives

Conclusion

The Duct Tape and Dream Mentorship Program has proven to be a transformative initiative, empowering emerging cultural centers to navigate the complexities of the independent arts sector with confidence and clarity. By fostering tailored mentorship relationships, the program equipped participants with vital tools to address operational challenges, enhance community engagement, and secure their sustainability in an evolving cultural landscape.

Through a combination of strategic planning, collaborative workshops, and hands-on guidance, the program supported each center in refining its mission, amplifying its impact, and developing actionable frameworks for future growth. From establishing long-term financial plans and strengthening local partnerships to fostering inclusivity and cultural resistance, the mentorship addressed the unique needs of each participant while fostering shared learning across the cohort.

This program not only underscored the importance of grassroots initiatives in driving cultural innovation but also highlighted the transformative power of mentorship in building resilient, vibrant communities. The shared experiences, challenges, and successes of the participants demonstrate the program's vital role in shaping a sustainable future for independent cultural centers across Europe and beyond. Looking ahead, the program's emphasis on collaboration and continued engagement will remain essential in nurturing the next generation of cultural leaders.



Recommendations for the future

It was recommended that for the future, a stronger connection between the participating centres in the Duct Tapes and Dreams program be prioritized. A shared travel experience for all participants to the same location—potentially at TEH’s coordination office—could foster face-to-face meetings, idea exchanges, and discussions about future goals.

Moreover, providing more opportunities for mentees to interact and collaborate with one another, as well as with other mentors, throughout the program would enhance the overall experience. Establishing a post-program platform where mentees can continue to share progress and maintain connections would also be an excellent way to ensure sustained support and collaboration.

