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Partner search 4 : Belgium

Culture sub-Program

Strand/category Cooperation project

Deadline 7th October 2015

Cultural operator(s)

Name Province of Liege – Culture Department

Short description

Local intermediate public authority active in developing local and transnational cultural projects. Thanks to its knowledge of the situation on the cultural ground and its network of local and international stakeholders, the Culture Department has a useful expertise and hands-on experience and is in a position to develop cultural transnational projects, involved for many years in crossborder cultural collaborations.

As a tool of growth and individual development, Liege Province's Culture Department takes account of changes in society by integrating them in a process of analysis and reflection and pursues an active proximity policy, characterized by its openness towards others and its flexibility in its interventions. That's why the Province of Liege acts as a mediator by

- investing itself in specific areas of cultural activities : culture is a powerful driver for development, with community-wide social, economic and environmental impacts, such the valorisation of the industrial heritage through cultural actions ;
- supporting the creative activity in all its forms and promoting interdisciplinary : a wide range of cultural sectors are supported by the Department of Culture, from comics to music of any kind, from contemporary art to design ;
- by bringing together all the local and European key stakeholders on creative and innovative cultural projects.

Its main priorities are mainly :

- to encourage the audience development and to promote wider access to culture through cultural mediation and information work ;
- to provide financial and technical support to cultural operators, local and international cultural events organization ;
- to promote the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and to encourage the mobility of the cultural players, in particular artists ;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- to foster the collaboration between the various cultural disciplines and between the cultural sector and others (e.g. the industrial sector) at a local and European level.
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Project	
Field(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Creative writing, particularly poetry- Performing arts (Music)- Visual arts (sculpture and engraving)- Intangible cultural heritage linked to the industrial environment
Description	<p style="text-align: center;">Context</p> <p>Many member states of the European Union share a common industrial history, first in a state of growth and then gradually decreasing with a number of examples of industrial production areas definitively closed in some industrial European regions. These tragic events led to a major economic, identity and social crisis.</p> <p>In Belgium, the province of Liege was a major industrial region during the industrial revolution, in particular with the strong presence of the steel industry. This industrial region has entered in a long and structural crisis since the fifties. Today, Liege basin is still suffering from the decline of the steel industry. Indeed, the recent closure of the last blast furnace in the Liege steel producing area has illustrated the vulnerability of the Belgian steel industry. This situation has led to a serious economic and social crisis, with the loss of thousands of jobs.</p> <p>This context raises the question of the safeguarding, the renovation or the transformation of the intangible cultural heritage linked to the industrial heritage. This question is at the heart of the cultural and social concerns for the cultural and creative sector.</p> <p>The industrial heritage with its intangible aspects is both local and European. It has been forged over time, but also across borders and communities. The intangible cultural heritage linked to this industrial heritage is made up of local stories that together make the history of Europe. As the industry sector has always required a large workforce, it has always resorted to foreign workers. Many of their descendants always live in host countries and participate in the economical, social, cultural or political life of the community.</p>

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The intangible cultural heritage linked to the industrial heritage is highly vulnerable, most often because of a lack of awareness, recognition or valorization, but also because of changing economic trends and negative perceptions.

Summary

Thanks to the Europe Creative Programme, the cultural operators taking part in the project wish to pool their resources and their skills :

- to contribute to the safeguarding of the intangible cultural expressions associated to the industrial heritage through a research approach and an artistic and pedagogical approach
- to provide various audiences with detailed information to understand the importance of preserving this heritage
- to encourage the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and the mobility of artists and cultural players through an interdisciplinary approach
- to support the capacity of the European cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally by encouraging the networking of the European cultural players and a process of reflecting on the consequences of the industrial changes with its major socio-economic effects in the cultural field and the challenges facing the cultural and creative sector.

Through the project, the partner operators use the artistic creation to foster greater awareness, thanks to the professional and amateur artists.

For the professional artists - Sculpture

The industrial heritage includes intangible dimensions such as technical know-how and the organization of work and workers. The industry sector has always stimulated the artists' imagination and creativity. Moreover, metal represents an artistic material able to create some special aesthetics, a proof of an ancient know-how and reflects the social tensions due to the industrial crisis.

The project will bring together European professional artists from the countries participating at the project and encourage them to produce some contemporary metal sculptures. The project will also contribute to their mobility and the circulation of their works.

Through the sculpture, the project enables the artists to express themselves and sets them the challenge of adapting their work to the material. Through his/her work, the artist plays a role as a witness of his/her age, represents a culture and a story.

For the amateur and professional artists – Engraving, Performing Arts and Creative writing.