

HOW TO EXCHANGE IN A CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC INEQUALITY?

**Report from the working group as part of the
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List of recommendations as presented by the working groups

Moderator: Gary Hills, (Brussels, Belgium), garyhills.com

Assistant Moderator: Yavor Kostov, *Plastelin Atelier* (Sofia, Bulgaria): www.atelie-plastelin.com



'Artists should make money work for them and not the opposite'

Key words: Engagement, Trust, Knowledge, Stock exchange, Transparency, Person to person.

Group 1

Team Leader: Caspar Nieuwenhuis

Case study: A platform **Generation2Generation** for professional development of young artists (16-23 years old). It aims to be a European start-up network for companies and theatres, connecting talent development programs, practitioners and facilitating exchange of theatre plays. The initiative comes from two organisations: [Likeminds](#), Netherlands, and [Glej Teater](#), Slovenia. The budget is unevenly distributed - one of the partners provides 50% of the initial budget, while another provides only 5%.

Approach: first of all the partner organisations got to know each other, made sure that they share the same values and aims. Then they thought of ways to distribute the workload: the partner with lower budget gets to do the tasks that require intellectual work but not much money (i.e. editing the handbook), whereas wealthier partners took on more expenses, such as travelling costs, etc.

The project is currently waiting for approval for the EU financial support¹.

Recommendations:

1. Use differences as a starting point
2. Be honest
1. Prepare yourself properly – get engaged before get married
2. Be generous
3. Feel self-confident, be strong
4. Get ready to get changed and manage the changes
5. Dare to take risks
6. Back each other up
7. Be flexible

Follow as a rule of thumb:

1. Communicate continuously
2. Take time for the informal

¹ This case study is the same as in Group five, because the team leaders of the two groups are the initiators of Generation2Generation project.

Group 2

Team Leader: Kim Simpson

[Superrational](#) is a digital ecosystem that enables artists and audiences to interact more meaningfully; it gives the possibility to search, discover and connect with artists and producers, crowdfund and crowdsource new digital and live content, collaborate online across artforms, promote work with minimal effort and focus on actual creative work.

On the Internet site a visual map shows how complete ongoing projects are, what else the collaborators are working on and all the projects linked to a bigger creative system. Members can research about financing projects, using alternative currency and time-banking in order to achieve productivity in the face of austerity. The project is under way, new features are constantly being introduced.

The project takes into account requirements and conditions of international exchange and provides a system that meets them.

Recommendations presented by the work group:

1. Invest a lot of **time**. Spend time together and try to understand each other's context.
2. Make sure you are talking about the same things, do not assume that people use the words that you use and mean the same. Create a shared glossary.
3. Establish **shared values**, maintain a constant dialogue about what these values are. Write a manifesto and review it regularly.
4. Establish agreements on the main **motivation** of the project, and if this motivation is artistically informed it will negate the inequalities that come up while collaborating. Define whom you are doing it for.
5. Establish concrete **rules**: define who is responsible for what, and who is taking the decisions.
6. Engage in a **dialogue**. Make a safe place to challenge and disagree with each other.
7. Be **honest**. Make sure you know your expectations: from yourselves, regarding your partners' contribution, the outcome of the project, etc.
8. Understand and share your **competences** and **limitations**.
9. Prioritise your spending – if you have limited resources, put them in the things that matter most. Make **money** the last resort. Value partnerships before money. Keep money out of artistic dialogue as much as possible.
10. Strengthen your local **networks** alongside building your international networks.
11. Build an **exit strategy**.
12. Acknowledge that inequality is not just economic, it relates to skills, to cultural differences, to your position within a sector.

Group 3

Team Leader: Euripides Laskaridis

In Greece laws determine that social and health security represent very large amount of the total remuneration of artists (nearly 50%). This rule is applicable also when artists work abroad. Thus, their fees are much higher than those of their European colleagues. As a result many art managers from other countries are reluctant to engage Greek artists regardless of how renowned they are. What can be done to remedy the situation at home and abroad?

Recommendations:

1. Be partners, not opponents. **Stand side-by side, not face-to-face.** Share your values.
2. Be **honest**, be transparent, be open to discussion and express directly your interests.
3. Make sure that **the core** of what you share is powerful.
4. Establish the **want** to work with a certain partner.
5. Educate yourselves on each other's **cultural differences**.
6. Share **information** on what you really do, see what you can do for each other – use a platform on the Internet where people share their skills.
7. Make exchange less complicated by using EU instruments: **push for lobbying politicians** in your country, and then within the EU. Try to see what you can achieve on the practical level: visas, VAT, social security rules. The EU membership makes it easier in the areas of common law.
8. Enhance **mobility** to enhance **knowledge**

Group 4

Team Leader: Sarah Spanton

Case study: [Leeds Creative Timebank](#) in the city of Leeds, UK – a membership organisation that enacts a process of exchange, that is vital to arts.

Creative Timebanking is a system, which allows artists and arts workers to exchange their skills, knowledge and experience with other members, using **units of one hour of time as a currency**.

The system covers all types of services: building of sets, costume making, foreign language courses, consultancy, accounting etc. Every member receives virtual 'tokens' for their work, and can use them to get the services that they need. Monetary exchange is not allowed. The administrative services, that maintain: [Leeds Creative Timebank](#), are provided through the system itself. [Leeds Creative Timebank](#) has been launched in 2010

in Leeds, Yorkshire and now a hundred people are involved. The organisation has supported other communities of artists training them how to set up their timebanks in the North East, North West of England and in Den Haag, The Netherlands.

Creative Timebanking is an equalising tool, because it values each participant's time evenly. For the moment it functions by locality but has full potential to be used cross-border.

Suggestion: [IETM](#) might form a **Creative Timebanking** system for its members.

Group 5

Team Leader: Marko Bratus

Case study: A platform **Generation2Generation**² for professional development of young artists (16-23 years old).

Recommendations:

1. Don't collaborate for collaboration's **sake**. It can imply cultural imperialism. After the fall of the Berlin wall Holland brought a lot of financial resources to the Eastern Europe, but without real interest in the local artists, and they felt used. Collaborate for artistic purposes, not for collaboration's sake, not for money's sake.
2. Don't **overestimate** your partner, and don't **underestimate** yourself, if you don't have financial advantage. **Competence** doesn't come with money.
3. **Artistic equality** is one of the most important points. Your exchange is not based on your budget, but on the artistic possibilities and potential for cooperation.
4. **Money** isn't the only way to contribute to the budget. Do the things that cost less in your country, but are important for the project: web site, editing of the handbook etc. There are different views on what a resource is in the South and the North. You might discover that you possess something that is considered as a resource by your partner, for example theatre companies in the South have their own venues while theatres in the North are structured more as production houses.
5. **Good work gets you more work**. Do not give up if it is not a success the first time, professionals and audience notice creations of talent and skill.
6. **Communication** between partners takes **time**; don't rush things. If you know your partner and trust your partner, it is easier to cooperate.
7. Be wary of right wing funding, which is currently rearing in the North

² This case study is the same as in Group one because the team leaders of the two groups are the initiators of Generation2Generation project. For the description of the project, please see the Group one

Practical suggestions:

1. Consider **festival exchange** of artistic work as a way to get to know each other, for example: 'Week of Bulgarian culture in Rome'.
2. **Commercial arrangements** – the market demand for a specific national art creates a basis for cooperation, but keep the integrity of the partners and respect the artistic principles.
3. Make a **list** of possible sources of funding for international cooperation and post it on the IETM website.

Ioana Pankova
Art Manager, Journalist
joana_pankova@yahoo.com