

ART. COMMUNITY. WORK.

Ideas and Tips for
Artistic Community Work

English

Performing Arts
Programm
Berlin

- 2 Welcome
- 4 *The Invisible Factory Setting -
Why Theaters Have to Rethink Community Work*
Leyla Ercan
- 12 *The Actual Project Is the Encounter -
From Mindset to Practice in Artistic Community Work*
Eva Hartmann, Christina Runge,
Christopher Utpadel
- 20 *From Submitting the Application to the Final
Accounting - Tips, Tricks and Typical Pitfalls in
Financing Artistic Community Work*
Ronan Favereau
- 28 *What We've Been Doing for Years -
A Plea for Community Work as Long-Term
Relationship Care*
Chang Nai Wen, Michael Tibes
- 34 *Production Questions About Artistic
Community Work - Practical Tools for Orientation*
Laura Böttinger, Ronja Kindler,
Justus Rothlaender, Trang Trần
- 40 Service
- 43 About the Authors
- 45 About Us and Imprint

Dear Readers,

Artistic community work makes cultural and societal participation possible and creates a variety of connections within civil society. We are very pleased to be able to offer you ideas and tips for this work with this publication!

The Berlin Performing Arts Program is active in this field with different formats: we have been supporting community and neighborhood projects that strengthen the connection between the independent performing arts and audiences since 2024. No matter whether it is within theaters, care facilities, neighborhood centers or allotment gardens, whether it is a dance workshop, mobile printing workshop or artistic encounter format, whether it is for seniors, young people, people with psychiatric experience or queer communities – the projects supported cover a wide variety of artistic community work.

With *SPIELRAUM – Freie Szene Tage der darstellenden Künste Berlin (SPIELRAUM – the Berlin Days of the Independent Performing Arts Community)*, we increase the visibility of the independent performing arts and place the focus on participatory formats – the schedule of programming created together with the Freie Szene provides an invitation to meet and take part (freie-szene-tage.de/en). In addition, we collect knowledge about artistic community work and pass it on – in network meetings, professional events (for example, the symposium *common pARTs* in 2025 in cooperation with Neuköllner Oper) and, not least of all, with this publication.

With it, we turn to you – artists, mediators, producers and additional members of the Freie Szene who are already active in community projects or would like to be.

Here is an overview of the articles:

- Leyla Ercan takes a critical look at the term “community” and opens up perspectives for a differentiated practice that is sensitive to power.
- Eva Hartmann, Christina Runge and Christopher Utpadel show how encounters can become the core of artistic work and provide structures to design participatory processes.
- Ronan Favereau writes about the financing of artistic community work and provides practical tips about applications, organization and accounting.
- Chang Nai Wen and Michael Tibes show how marginalized perspectives can be strengthened and how sustainable connections can be made possible beyond individual projects.
- Laura Böttinger, Ronja Kindler, Justus Rothlaender and Trang Trần shine a spotlight on typical production questions that arise in artistic community work.

Between the chapters, you will find short profiles of community and neighborhood projects that we have supported. A final service section provides an overview of the many points of contact, tools and funding opportunities that already exist in Berlin.

We hope that this publication gives you helpful inspiration for your practice and wish you much success, fun and exciting encounters!

With best wishes,
Florian Hohnhorst and Linus Lutz

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The Invisible
Factory Setting

Why Theaters
Have to Rethink
Community Work

The term “community” has been experiencing a boom in the cultural sector for several years – be it through community-based theater projects, jobs intended for “marginalized communities” or exhibitions that are intended to be made through the participation of certain communities. In doing so, a decidedly less differentiated use of the term prevails, in which many unquestioned presuppositions and unspoken expectations are found. Not infrequently, this leads to methodical uncertainties, goal conflicts caused by different perspectives and, ultimately, to projects that fail or remain less sustainable.

As a former diversity agent at a theater and as an independent organizational consultant in the cultural sector today, I often encounter this in cultural institutions from the very first contact. I am asked regularly: “But we are an open house – so why don’t they come to our programming?” In response to the question of what “open” means and who is meant with “they”, come mostly hesitant answers like: “Well, the diverse/post-migrant/Turkish/queer communities”. In the clichéd desire “to become more diverse and reach groups that have not been represented previously”, there are always a great deal of unspoken specifications that must first be questioned critically:

- Who are “we” – institutionally, socially, individually? Who was the institution initially built for? Who wasn’t kept in mind? Which communities do we reach reliably, often over the course of decades, if not centuries? Why? Do we see how we address, serve and create the needs, the habits of these groups unconsciously but systematically?
- Who is “the community”? Who are we respectively envisioning there? What do we actually mean by “community” – how do we differentiate this term from other concepts such as “target group”, “audience” or “network”? What function does this differentiation, “us – them”, have on our self-image?
- What is the goal? Should the communities be part of the audience? Do we want to bear them more in mind when creating the programming? Should they share resources and power?

This means that the critical question should be: how do we have to change as an institution or team in order to be more plural, inclusive and relevant for the widest variety of communities? This shows that community-based cultural work is much more complex and requires much more than the clichéd use of the term implies. This is why I would like to undertake a cursory sharpening of the term in the following – along the course of my own experiences in the cultural sector.

The Origins of the Community Approach

Let's start with the bad news: there is no universal definition of "community". To begin with, different historical lines of origin converge here: the term comes from US-American culture and is an expression of its traditionally very communally influenced societal structures, such as Christian communities. Civil society engagement and community service play a much more central role there than they do in Germany with its developed welfare state. The term underwent an expansion during the emancipation movements of the 1960s, especially within the African-American civil rights movement and the queer communities. There, it became the starting point for struggles for basic rights, visibility and empowerment. A third context is the digital space in which "community" describes groups of people who interact over digital platforms and usually share temporary or thematic interests.

In the term community as it is standardly used in German culture today, these lines of discourse are integrated equally and are mixed with concepts like "societal group", "target group", "audience" or "network".

Communities find, form and define themselves by themselves

1) Communities: Self-Determined, Collective, Process-Oriented

In cultural institutions, "community" often stands for the desire for an expanded, more diverse audience. Anyone who wants to work in a community-based way must be clear about what that implies: a precise knowledge of existing communities – their composition, stores of knowledge, cultural use preferences, their artistic desires as well as their political and social interests. A white-Eurocentric influenced institution cannot define externally how a community is composed since communities find, form and define themselves by themselves.

With recourse to the term "community" and the struggle of marginalized groups in the USA, "community" in the context of diversity development is understood as "(political) interest group", "that includes people who share experiences of discrimination". Statements like "we would like to have more Turkish communities in our audience" therefore fall short. On the one hand, the term "audience" is out of place:

1 Diversity Arts Culture: Glossary "Community". diversity-arts-culture.berlin/woerterbuch/community
2 Nguyễn, Nhu Y Linda, Samson, Welela; Frey, Giacomo (2023): United Networks Study. Platz (ein)nehmen. Gespräche über communitybasiertes Wissen und Forderungen
BiPoC-zentrierter Initiativen in der deutschen Kunst- und Kulturlandschaft (Taking Place. Conversations About Community-Based Knowledge and Needs of BiPoC-Centered
Initiatives in the German Art and Culture Landscape), p.13. <https://unitednetworks.eu/un-resources>

community work aims at community-building processes and institutional change, not the simple expansion of audiences. On the other hand, there is no unified "Turkish community", after all, "Community does not designate a specific group of people. The people who feel belonging to a community do not generally all know each other personally" (Diversity Arts Culture). The search for such a community is much more the expression of a white gaze that sees marginalized groups as homogenous. Such projections reproduce racialized and deficit-oriented perspectives, strengthen biases and stabilize existing power relationships.¹

An additional semantic fuzziness results from the synonymous use of "community" and "target group". Target groups are groups of potential customers constructed by companies who are addressed with market-oriented offers and marketing measures. They are not self-determined groups in which people enter into relationships, act together and negotiate political interests. Instead, target groups are defined by demographic, socioeconomic and psychographic features with the goal of maximizing the incentive to buy.

2) Communities: Shared Experiences, Values, Positions, Interests

A community frequently addressed in the cultural sector is BiPoC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). The term designates people who have experienced racism and racialization and can, depending on the context, include or exclude migrant and/or Jewish perspectives. As a collective political self-designation, the acronym serves "to address the community, to create solidarity between racialized groups and describes a counter-hegemonic movement to the *white*-dominant system within which artists and cultural practitioners work"². At the center is a collective process in which political strategies and practices of a solidary, empowering and antiracist coexistence are negotiated on the basis of shared experiences and shared values. Thus, a community becomes a place of connectedness and exchange: "Although they do not usually know each other personally or meet regularly, a positive group identity and sense of belonging are created by shared political stances" (Diversity Arts Culture, as cited in United Networks Study).

3) Communities: Heterogenous, Polyphonic, Intersectional

In contrast to associations, communities generally work independently of people and places as political interest and discourse groups. The LGBTQIA* community has neither clearly nameable spokespersons nor can it be traced to a representative and clearly situated group.

Instead, it is a heterogenous, polyphonic community landscape that is constantly changing. As ideational and discursive collectives, communities do not have classic representation structures such as boards of directors or managing directors. “Instead, there are associations or initiatives in many communities that shape the political orientation of the community and are a spokesperson for them” (Diversity Arts Culture) such as the Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma (the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma).

Many communities of marginalized groups have continued to differentiate themselves in recent years with intersectionality. This approach assumes that forms of discrimination like racism, sexism, classism and queerphobia do not work in isolation, but instead overlap and strengthen each other. Correspondingly, experiences are always shaped through the interplay of multiple identity features, such as the queer Black woman or the disabled trans* person. It is especially people who are subject to multiple discriminations who have contributed to the differentiation of community discourses and policies as well as to the formation of new communities, such as Prisma Queer Migrants in Hanover (where I live).

4) Communities: Fluid, Dynamic, Adaptable

The fact that communities are usually organized independent from people and places give them flexibility and the ability to respond to current topics and events. Two selected events – the racist murder of George Floyd and the racially motivated attack in Hanau, both in 2020 – led to a strong political mobilization of the BIPOC communities which continues to the present day. Hanau became a community location with multilayered meanings: as a memorial for the victims and their loved ones, as a place of current struggles by marginalized people for recognition and as a symbol for racist institutional violence. The diversity and dynamic of the BIPOC communities contributed to “Hanau” quickly spreading as a signifier for the topic of racism, especially in digital and artistic spaces: on social media platforms, in podcasts, blogs, theater pieces and museum exhibitions. The driving force were the BIPOC communities themselves, who articulated their experiences in a racist society and their political interests using the shared reference point “Hanau”.

Prerequisites for Community-Based Cultural Work

Culture makers, from funders to cultural institutions to cultural policymakers, often ask me how community-based cultural work with people underrepresented in art and culture and work successfully. After all, institutional structures and organizational logistics are seldom

compatible with dynamics of self-organized interest groups. My answer, “Actually, you’ve already been practicing community work for centuries.”, irritates many respondents.

The bourgeois theater in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Germany was a result of the empowerment and emancipation of the middle class. In contrast to the aristocratic court, theater culture and popular wandering troupes, permanent municipal theaters were created as community locations of the middle class, spaces in which political and social interests, cultural preferences, national feelings of identity and the education of taste could be negotiated.

Despite their changes in the last century, today’s city and municipal theaters are still tailored to one very specific community: people who are able-bodied, socialized within the white-Eurocentric dominant culture, heteronormative and provided with economic, social, symbolic and cultural capital. The fact that they are not seen as distinct community locations lies in the fact that these interests, values and attitudes have become the neutral “factory setting” – invisible, but with enormous normative and exclusionary effective force. Such traditional structures of privilege exist in every institution. This is precisely why we have to recognize them, reflect upon them critically and deconstruct them.

There are no quick solutions: Community-based cultural work always implies sustainable community-building

Successful community-based cultural work must take all of this into consideration. Empowering work for groups who have previously been excluded includes making up for previous unfairness: resources and powers that previously benefitted privileged groups must now be made more accessible to marginalized groups. Of course, this also brings social inequality and structures of disadvantage into focus – which is often seen as an additional effort but which is an essential task.

There are no quick solutions: Community-based cultural work always implies sustainable community building: the creation of new, more plural and more inclusive communities in which the old us-versus-them

differences are dissolved. This implies procedural work, the establishment of trust, the shared negotiation of values, attitudes and interests, inclusive narratives, of artistic practices marked by polyphony and care, the removal of structural barriers – to put it briefly: a theater community with a lived policy and culture of solidary coexistence. Practically, what this means most of all is power sharing: the distribution and provision of spaces, capacities, resources and power to artists and interested parties from marginalized groups.

An example for this are the queer, BIPoC and refugee theater communities at Kampnagel in Hamburg. The director and theater maker Mable Preach has created a workable foundation for a plural, sustainable theater through co-creative, participatory and empowering processes. If we invest sustainably in artistic and political community building like this today, perhaps in two hundred years this will then be the unquestioned factory setting in German theaters.

From Experience: Community & Neighborhood Projects

Bicicleta Manifesta

FELD Theater &
Atelier SER

A bicycle becomes a mobile silk-screening workshop around FELD Theater: here, people of all ages consider socially relevant topics, develop slogans for them and print them on posters. Alongside the polyphonic printed works, this creates a space for exchange and encounter – cultural participation on two wheels.



You can learn more about all of the community and neighborhood projects here: pap-berlin.de/en/community-and-neighborhood-projects

Get to Move Together Christelle-Ahia Kamanan

At Tanzfabrik Kreuzberg, straightforward gatherings offer an opportunity to experience dance without a prescribed choreography. Participants explore their own movements and, in doing so, develop their expression and creativity. Led by Ahia Kamanan, an artist with experience in West African dance, the sessions support fun, self-empowerment and connectedness.

The Actual Project is
the Encounter

From Mindset to
Practice in Artistic
Community Work

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I and We

At the beginning of this text came encounters that anticipated the title *The Actual Project is the Encounter* or confirmed it in practice. I, Eva Hartmann, was asked by the Berlin Performing Arts Program to lead a workshop on participatory performing arts for the symposium *common pARTs* and to invite two experts for an exchange. This was the start of a conversation between Christina Runge, Christopher Utpadel and myself. The three of us, and later the participants of the workshop, formed a temporary collective or community, in which we shared experiences and questions from practice. (We use terms like “community” here as a shared basis of understanding in the knowledge of different perspectives of these as well as the question of whether they should still be used.)

In doing so, something fundamental could be seen that I know from my coaching work with a variety of people and groups: the unknown, the unpredictable, not yet foreseeable that we always encounter when we journey outside of our “I” space and form a “we” with other people (within a topic, in a project, et cetera). This means that in every moment, every individual needs something specific, an impulse, words, an action, in order to gradually bring forth the collective and carry it forward. You have to be ready to accept the unknown, the not knowing as a basic assumption. This openness also contains a reflection, curiosity and an interest in our own boundaries as well as those of the others – “boundary” in turn not as an insurmountable barrier, but instead as a membrane that breathes, is transparent and which can be flexible in the interplay of I and we. This boundary is necessary in order to know in the moment where I begin and end and at what place the other person can begin and vice versa – with the awareness that we bring different life experiences with us embodied in values, rules and norms as well as roles, the division of power, patterns of communication and behavior. These are visible and invisible, spoken and unspoken.

A System for Creating a Temporary Artistic Collective

When artists work with neighbors, young people, inhabitants of the city or other individuals or groups outside of their own “systems”, a collective artistic process takes place that is often difficult to see in advance. It is oriented around a specific project, but also requires the conscious negotiation of time, responsibility and decision-making powers. In addition, it requires the courage to open yourself, to proceed with the best intentions, to talk with each other instead of about each other and to ask questions instead of answering them yourself.

In order to depict this coming together as well as provide a possible system for artistic community work, we have developed the following collage-like form from our workshop.

Drawing on Christina Runge's professional experience, we use this as an example to illustrate the complexity of a neighborhood-based, participatory approach, the encounters that are the actual project. In reference to this, we present a structure developed by Christopher Utpadel – [A.L.I.G.N./C.A.R.E./L.O.O.P.](#) – in order to consciously create participatory processes and sustainably reflect upon them. The collage thus brings a specific project context together with a general mindset and a possible structuring of before, during and after of a temporary artistic collective. The open ends of the collage invite the readers to expand the collage with their own associations and experiences as well as to apply parts of it in their own respective practice and to continue to expand it.

A.L.I.G.N. - Negotiate the Basics

At the beginning of an artistic cooperation comes the shared alignment of the project and the clarification of the working conditions.

We encounter a twelve-year-old boy. And four female college students who are friends. We encounter a cooking group that meets once or twice a month. It includes a senior citizen who can only leave her apartment with a walker or in a wheelchair. We encounter a woman who has temporary housing and is searching for an apartment for her family. And an older man who can only participate under a fake name. We encounter a person who would like to only appear as a voice. And a choir that sings and dances.

We encounter six languages. We encounter experiences of displacement in the first or second generation. We encounter fears of losing the parent's right to welfare assistance. We encounter existing conflicts. We encounter people who take care of each other. We encounter loneliness.

We encounter very different time capacities: some people can only meet with us when their children are at daycare or school. Others have time once a week after work. Some only have time in the evening, only irregularly or, at short notice, no time at all. Some would like to meet more frequently.

- A** Attend stands for visiting, hosting and meeting outside of artistic contexts before the invitation for shared work.
- L** Listen means actively hearing opinions, experiences as well as doubts before a specific artistic idea is formulated.
- I** Identify asks about tensions, expectations and potentials that are obvious or could occur in the process.
- G** Ground clarifies specific resources and framework conditions that work for everyone without any guilty consciences.
- N** Name stands for formulating a shared concern and goal with all of the participants. It is realistic and does not only name the end of the shared project, but also wishes for the time afterward.

C.A.R.E. - Supporting the Process

During the artistic process, the shared work must be accompanied structurally and responsibly.

We encounter people who have never been in a theater before. Or were never on a stage. We encounter reluctance and disinterest. A desire for exchange. Openness. Curiosity. And expectations. We encounter many questions about what the project will be. And we see that it is essential to listen in order to be able to find shared answers.

We encounter different communication options and habits: ideally, call on a mobile phone. And also send an email. Only contact by WhatsApp. Or only using a landline. It's even better to just come by. For a visit to someone's apartment.

We encounter spaces used temporarily outside of the theater with direct contact to public space. An unused storefront. A café with a socially engaged owner. We encounter a housing development company that operates a neighborhood center. We encounter a neighborhood management office. A district center. And district mothers. A youth culture center that needs free workshop options. We encounter people who invite us to their choir rehearsals. And people who are continuously on location, who have already established trust and who can give us contacts.

- C** Communication names the communication channels and roles and brings about sustainable decisions so that participation does not lead to uncertainty.
- A** Anticipation describes the experienced-based anticipation and avoidance of conflicts before they become noticeable.
- R** Realization checks, also during the ongoing process, what is realistic under the given conditions and how the process relates to the living realities of the participants.
- E** Expectation continuously compares expectations, as these can shift with time.

L.O.O.P. - Transition and Passing On

An artistic collaboration does not end with the presentation or publication. The relationships, experiences and shifts made last long beyond the specific project.

We encounter people who need an employment contract. And people who can't have one. We encounter the request to receive money in a paper envelope, if it all possible. We encounter the German Protection of Young Persons Act. And the fact that there can be no insurance coverage on stage without a contract.

We encounter the necessity that the people must be accompanied to and from their home. And that there are still physical barriers in many buildings. And what is needed to overcome these.

We encounter the fact that the ticket prices are too high. And the initiative to change this with a neighborhood ticket.

We encounter structural limits. We encounter personal limits. And the limits of the project. And see how all of this is related.

And we encounter ourselves again. Also after the end of the project. After all, the actual project is the encounter.

- L** Listen creates a conscious space for feedback from all participants. Different perspectives from the process are brought up and taken seriously.
- O** Observe means looking together at what has changed during the process. Which dynamics played a role, where were the frictions and which decisions were fundamental?
- O** Open stands for transparently making results, insights, experiences as well as documentation and media accessible. This can take place within the group or, with everyone's consent, in exchange with institutions, the public or future project partners.
- P** Pass it on stands for the conscious transfer of knowledge, contacts and impulses. The group that began the process does not have to continue it infinitely (temporary community). It should, however, consciously decide how to pass on the responsibility or how the community can be dissolved without creating disappointment.

From Experience: Community & Neighborhood Projects

Dissolving Juliet Meding & Wanda Dubrau

A gathering with a focus on neurodivergent, chronically ill and invisible disabled perspectives, at Ballhaus Ost, at Vierte Welt and online: in a relaxed environment, an exchange about (access) needs and crip-specific forms of organization and aesthetics – on the lookout for new connections and possibilities for action.

Dance and Humor: Encounter in Movement Kysy Fischer

People with psychiatric experience and interested parties from the neighborhood of the contact and advisement institution KommRum e. V. in Berlin-Friedrichshain find low-threshold access to dance – through improvisation and humorous movements. This supports creativity and a zest for life and is supplemented through shared theater visits that allow new experiences and encounters.

Open Practice I Thursday in the Organism Democracy Club Real

In the wilderness of the organism democracy on Osloer Straße (an outdoor performance venue of Ballhaus Ost), there is space for many things – short performances, journeys of discovery or mask workshops for children as well as hanging around with snacks and masks for young adults. This allows spontaneous ideas to emerge – for example, short performances like *Als Blattlaus zum Späti* (*Going to the Convenience Store as an Aphid*).



You can learn more about all of the community and neighborhood projects here: pap-berlin.de/en/community-and-neighborhood-projects

TADAs – A Cultural Project for More Participation in Contemporary Circus Berlin Circus Festival

The Berlin Circus Festival and Lebenshilfe Berlin bring contemporary circus to people who have difficult accessing culture: circus in the Lebenshilfe-Tages-Center, workshops, taking part in setting up the festival and attending the festival allow a look behind the circus tent and active participation.

From Submitting
the Application to the
Final Accounting

Tips, Tricks and
Typical Pitfalls
in Financing Artistic
Community Work

In the independent performing arts community, the sentence “You can be very creative with the budget” is often used as encouragement. This helped me to understand the budget not as a dry Excel table, but instead as the blueprint for a project. What is truly important to the applicant can be read from this blueprint: values, priorities, participation and also which risks are brave and which are careless.

Practical questions arise from this: where will the project be developed and where will it be realized? How much preliminary work do I allow myself to do before the funding application is approved? And, at the same time, how do I prevent that everything has to take place under time pressure directly after approval? How do I account for relationship work, trust and continuity in the budget without all of this being lost in a compound line item like “communication”? And: how do I achieve a proof of proper usage of funds at the end without the final days of the project becoming a marathon? In the following, I will refer to different phases and aspects of project work from which typical pitfalls and good practice can be discerned.

Cartography of a Project

In my own jury and project practice, one parameter is often especially relevant for me: the cartography of a project, meaning the movements between the project base and the project location. How and where do I situate myself and my project? How long or short are the distances for the participants? Does everything take place in the same neighborhood, in the same part of the city, all throughout Berlin or beyond?

What is important here is not only the distance, but also the direction: is my project a neighborhood project – is it about places visible and institutions anchored within a community? Does my project contain a movement from the inside to the outside – do we move decentralized into another social environment in order to open up space? Or is it more a movement from the outside to the inside – for example, in the form of an invitation into institutional space? These movements are not neutral or arbitrary: they decide which thresholds exist and which risks occur – and this, in turn, becomes visible in the finances.

Projects with larger distances are often problematic in the context of community work because they lack an important factor: the direct pulse. Posters, newsletters or a large network do not replace something in the intended location noticing whether and, most of all, how an invitation and its message arrives.

At first, it is simply a question of costs: does the project management need a local transportation ticket or long-distance train ticket? The longer the route, the greater the risk that the project may work

organizationally, but not locally. Anyone who is working despite distance must make visible in the budget how local anchoring has been created, is created and will be further pursued: who are the reliable contacts on location? When, where and in what rhythm do meetings take place?

Practical example: I realized a project in another German state. Institutionally, a lot of things were present (school, social organization, association); I even knew some of the cooperation partners personally. There was advertising in the form of posters, flyers and newsletters. All of this, however, did not mean that participants actually showed up, because the project took place during school vacation, did not require a binding commitment and many families spontaneously went on vacation. With a great deal of effort and very spontaneously, I was able to find participants through a neighboring organization. The critical point, however, is: you often fail to see what is essential from a distance.

If the budget items are created in a relatively balanced way from the beginning [...], the necessary adjustments later can be made more easily

The Budget as a Blueprint

Where the image of the cartography helps to an eye on physical distances, the budget as a blueprint can describe a specific space for negotiations: it shows very specifically how exactly the realization has been planned. Is there enough space and light (resources)? Do the routes work (phases)? Are there dead zones (vague line items, avoidable costs)? Are there tasks that have not been budgeted or assigned? Who receives which space?

This quickly becomes visible during assignment: does the project management get a suite with a balcony and the assistant a broom closet? This analogy sounds simple, but it is a central point: in community projects, assistants, helping hands and coordinators often make a big contribution to the realization. If this “room” has been planned too small in the blueprint, realization will be difficult later or the project will not receive funding in the first place.

It is often forgotten that budgets do not only have to be “correct” and “balanced”, they also have to be adaptable. Community projects almost always change: dates shift, formats are adapted, participants leave the project, new needs arise. Budgets cannot be changed arbitrarily; each large shift must be discussed. If the budget items are created in a relatively balanced way from the beginning and the resources are fairly distributed in the team, the necessary adjustments later can be made more easily and realized within the margins without the project having to be structurally reinvented each time. An “extra room” in the blueprint, that is, an intentionally included and not completely planned budget item, can generally provide relief for the entire project.

Encounter, Cooperation, Acquisition ... How Can These Be Translated Into Numbers?

Many problems arise because advance work is described in the presentation of the project which is hardly visible in the costs. This is exactly the core of the issue: how do I translate the initial encounters, trust-building, cooperations and long-term follow-up work into plannable positions? Specifically, are preliminary meetings, dates for the acquisition of participants and coordination with project partners planned? In what frequency? How many hours are realistic for this?

It is important to keep the guidelines of funders in mind early on: what services can be billed? What supporting documents may be expected for this? Is there a blanket separation, for example into one third preparation and follow-up and two thirds realization? Or is the preparation and follow-up included in the working hours for the realization? How do I organize myself in these respective frameworks? These logistics are always dependent on the respective project – if I can recognize these early on, this creates a clear framework for all participants.

I personally advise consciously planning a large amount of preparation and follow-up in the budget: as many preliminary meetings with partners as possible help to find your own rhythm and avoid a “cold start”. A comprehensive, well-documented and public final round ensures the transfer of knowledge and strengthens the later partnership, also beyond the formal end of the project.

Who Can Afford to Participate?

As a participant in a project, my absence was once interpreted as a lack of interest. The actual reason was simply that I had to be at work. Such situations are not only uncomfortable for the people affected; they can also lead to tension and stigmatization in the group

dynamic. This is especially counterproductive in community work, because the different living and working realities of the participants are not always visible.

Practically, this means: the perspectives of the participants should be thought of as a resource – as an actual state and not a target state. A simple but precise analysis is helpful in planning: what are the specific obstacles for the participants? Who has time, who doesn't? Who has to work, who doesn't? Who has care work, who doesn't? Who has long travel times, who doesn't? Paying participants for their participation, however, is generally only possible in exceptional cases in light of our framework conditions. This is why it is even more important to anticipate obstacles and to deal with them correspondingly – with clear communication, flexible timeframes, options to pause and then resume participation and a framework where absence is not automatically evaluated on a moral level.

In the budget, this translates into hours for catch-up, travel expenses for the participants or a larger number of dates due to division into smaller groups. The result is an expectation that is based on the resources actually available, even if the project may be decelerated because of this.

Problems seldom arise from a lack of care, but instead because the accounting is prioritized too late

Accounting and Where-Used Lists:

Be Certain From the Beginning

The proof of proper use of funds does not conclude the project at the end, but instead accompanies the project from the first day. Problems seldom arise from a lack of care, but instead because the accounting is prioritized too late in the everyday life of the project. From an artistic, educational or partnership perspective, there is always something that is more urgent, usually for good reason. If too much is put off for too long, however, a large amount of things that have been neglected will have to be dealt with in a short time.

With this in mind, you can find a few points in the following that really help me in practice:

- Comply with the minimum fee limits. These are not nice to have, but instead a minimum standard. Fees that are too low are always noticed and can cause harsh criticism in the granting phase. In addition, the fees should be distributed fairly internally, of course.
- Clarify the ability to pay via invoice early on. Fees usually require proper accounting (often with a tax number). As the economic and personal realities of the participants can be very different, this should be clarified early on – and not shortly before the end of the project. If there are uncertainties, it is worth obtaining support: no matter whether from the responsible funding body, friendly organizations or experienced colleagues. Shortcuts or improvised solutions often lead to problems during final accounting – and, in the worst case, for uncomfortable consequences for the people affected.

A rule from practical experience: clarifying information briefly at the beginning of the project often helps – what is needed, by when and from whom?

- Calendar and cashflow: accounting does not only take place at the end. There are often requests for payment installments (monthly, for example) and fixed deadlines, sometimes also transitions between fiscal years. These should be treated like project milestones.

A rule from practical experience: it is helpful to set up a fixed rhythm for accounting (a monthly date, for example) instead of viewing it as secondary task that you will get around to at some point.

What Remains?

Situation in the Ecosystem, Zeitgeist, Connection

At the end of the day, “What remains?” is not only a lovely final consideration, but also a question of financing and legacy: how does the project situate itself in the ecosystem of the community in the long-term? Is it an answer to current cultural, societal or political conditions? Does it create a framework that can be used by others? Community work does not necessarily have to create a repeatable product. It can open perspectives, make dissonances visible and create connection for the participants.

Seen practically, this means: documentation should not only be thought of as a means for promotion, but instead as a resource for the partners and the respective community. Know-how, tools and

routines should be passed on so that partners can continue to further develop them afterward, also without the project management. In this sense, the project management is more a facilitator: not the center, but instead an enabler.

Thinking this one step further, community work is seldom worth it if it is only seen as a one-year project. A longer-term perspective, four years, for example, similar to a legislative period, helps as an orientation: where should the cooperation be in two, three, four years? What can be repeated, what must be changed? What is the next realistic step after the first year?

Brief Summary/Checklist:

- Cartography: where and how is the project situated? Which distances (short distance or train?), which barriers and which orientation determine the project?
- Preparatory work: are preliminary meetings, encounters and cooperations visible in the budget as hours with their own rhythm?
- Budget: is the distribution fair (suite vs. broom closet)? Have buffers and the ability to adjust positions been thought about?
- Participation: are resources (time, work, care, travel) realistically estimated? Is it possible for participants to rejoin after taking a break?
- Verification: have minimum fee limits been complied with? Has the ability to issue invoices been clarified early on? Are there fixed dates for installment requests and deadlines?

From Experience: Community & Neighborhood Projects

Trans/generations

Elena Rose Light
& Jäckie Rydz

A participatory project for trans*, gender-diverse and queer positioned people (INTA+) at Berliner Ringtheater: in workshops, the participants work with movement, ritual, drawing and writing about transition and trans* heroes. This strengthens visibility, creates access to theater and supports new, diverse audience relationships.



You can learn more about all of the community and neighborhood projects here: pap-berlin.de/en/community-and-neighborhood-projects

*You Have to
Water Art, Too
Dirty Daisy,
Performance
Initiative für
Absurdästhetik*

The allotment garden Biesenhorst II in Karlshorst becomes a stage – gardeners are invited to take part in intergenerational dance workshops. Stories come to life through biographical interviews and playful theatrical design. This results in encounters, mutual understanding and a space in which children and adults can learn from each other.

What We've Been
Doing for Years

A Plea for Community
Work as Long-Term
Relationship Care

Artistic Community Work as a Cartography of Hope

In his study *No Go World*, the anthropologist Ruben Andersson describes the creation of a global “geography of fear”. Danger, he argues, is not geographic. It is systemic. It is created from political decisions, media images and reactions to uncertainty. Spaces are reclassified: safe here, risky there; worthy of funding here, disposable there. To break out of this logic, according to Andersson, we need a different roadmap: not a map of control or administrative responsibilities – but instead a cartography of hope and opportunities, honeycombed with new connections.¹

What does this have to do with artistic community work? It describes what we have been doing for years: we do not see relationships as a nice byproduct of art, but instead as the foundation upon which we can work against societal fragmentation. When fear closes spaces, we create connections. When the logistics of funding separates, we hold on to continuity. When political responsibility hides behind jurisdictional limits, translocal networks share responsibility.

Who We Are – and Why We Talk About It

We have existed since 2008: Sisyphos, der Flugelefant (SdF). We are an independent, transcultural initiative from Berlin, created from the experience that cultural spaces in Germany are not equally accessible for all – and that even occasionally invited racialized, migrant or marginalized perspectives are rarely structurally anchored. With over one hundred partners from the fields of culture, social work and education, we work at the crossroads of institutions and the independent performing arts community, between artistic production and social reality, between recognition and precarity. In doing so, we are not concerned with simple representation, but instead with the shifting of perspectives.

In addition, we are a co-founder and partner of United Networks, an alliance of networks of racialized and marginalized art and culture makers in Germany, and thus bring our perspectives to structural policy work. This networking has sharpened our view of the conditions of cultural production: for us, relationships are not a supplement to the production of art. They are its infrastructure.

We work in a team with different societal positionings. For us, transcultural practice does not mean an equality of identities, but instead reflected cooperations across differences. We are thus speaking of a double position: as free members of the artistic community and as a part of those communities who are structurally disadvantaged. Our answer to the current separation is the cartography of hope we have described – not as an optimistic feeling, but instead as a lived practice.

1 Andersson, Ruben (2019): *No Go World: How Fear Is Redrawing Our Maps and Infecting Our Politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

How We Understand Artistic Community Work

For us, artistic community work does not mean reached segmented “target groups” or expanding the audience. It is also not simply participatory art or culture mediation. Instead, we understand it as an artistic process in which the aesthetic processes and social relationships are inextricably linked. Specifically, this means: art is not only created for people, but instead with people. Topics are not imposed from above, but instead decided upon together. Contradictory experiences may remain visible and the responsibility is truly shared. Structures for trust are established in the long-term.

The community is not only the audience, but also co-creators, whose perspectives and decisions shape the artistic process

Here, art is not only presentation, but also the testing of community. The community is not only the audience, but instead co-creators, whose perspectives and decisions shape the artistic process. And work means the continuous establishment of relationship and strengthening of structure – often beyond visible outputs. As a result, our engagement does not start with the determination of the target group – and also not with the event. It starts where encounters are possible – and encounters are seldom straightforward.

Some projects grow from long-term relationships across different contexts. Others start with a workshop, a further education process or a shared work process. It matters less how long a relationship has existed; but rather whether we create conditions in which it can be developed – without the pressure of expectations and without symbolic appropriation. A conversation can be the start – but whether the collaboration really works is first seen in the doing. In practice, differences become visible: in tempo, in communication, in dealing with responsibility. Trust does not come from declarations of intent, but instead from shared experiences and, with this in mind, at different speeds.

Invisible Infrastructure

For us, long-term relationship care means:

- Being present before content has been created
- Listening before formats are defined
- Speaking transparently about possibilities and limits
- Remaining available after projects end

What remains invisible is the effort required for this continuity:

- Unpaid preliminary conversations
- Conceptual work before financing is available
- Internal negotiations within a transcultural team
- Resolving conflicts between different expectations
- The responsibility for sensitive biographical topics
- Mediation between institution and community
- The readjustment of roles, schedules and expectations
- Openly admitting when assumptions prove wrong

The rationale of projects demands results. Relationship work, however, usually takes place before, in-between and afterward. It often evades precisely that visibility on which success is normally measured. In a transcultural team like ours, different languages, experiences with discrimination, conflict cultures and expectations come together. This is not a checklist with boxes to check off, but instead a permanent practice of understanding which also shapes our artistic formats.

Between the Rationale of Projects and Reality

We would like to be able to jointly clarify and distribute roles and responsibilities in projects early on. The reality of the independent performing arts community, however, often looks quite different: those in the team who have experience in submitting funding applications write concepts and develop budgets – unpaid, in advance and with uncertainty. The responsibility can be distributed more broadly once funding is provided. This creates structural difficulties. This is also why long-term relationship care means openly addressing these realities – not as a failure, but instead as a structural reality.

With the founding of United Networks, we experienced how relationship care in community work could be dealt with differently in a structural way: the federal program *Verbindungen fördern* (*Promoting Connections*), made the continuous, nationwide collaboration of networks of racialized, migrant, queer, disabled, rural and non-academic communities possible for many years. This resulted in the creation of long-term spaces for exchange and reflection in which responsibility was shared instead of individualized. At the same time, ways of working that

were sensitive to discrimination were strengthened and a transfer of knowledge was made possible that extended beyond individual projects.

What has happened after the end of the program demonstrates how fragile this infrastructure remains: with the loss of networks, not only do coordination centers disappear, but also spaces in which marginalized perspectives can be collectively negotiated and strengthened. Networks can stabilize relationship work, they can bundle it, relieve it and politically articulate it. It cannot, however, replace structural funding for independent groups.

Organize the Relationship: the UN Hospitality Rider

From the networking work, we have developed instruments in order to give structure to relationship work. One of these is the *UN Hospitality Rider*² – conversational guidelines for the beginning of a collaboration. It initiates the clarification of central questions:

Who bears which responsibility?

Which needs are actually formulated – and by whom?

Which resources are actually available?

Where are the structural limits?

This allows the planning process to be considered anew and expanded: away from a one-sided determination and toward a cooperative negotiation process. The relationship is not romanticized, but instead organized. Especially in contexts with unequal power relationships, this early transparency creates the foundation for a sustainable collaboration. This also includes the awareness of the structuring of spaces: who speaks first? Who moderates? What rules exist for disagreement? Which experiences need special protection?

In our practice, we work with safer space principles in certain contexts – especially where the focus is on racialized and marginalized communities. Protection mechanisms, community agreements and clear moderation are requirements for participation here. In open, heterogeneous constellations, we are now increasingly speaking of braver spaces. This concerns not only protection, but instead also the readiness to let tension become visible and to moderate responsibly. Different perspectives should encounter each other without the difference automatically producing hierarchy.

The creation of such spaces is not a step that takes place afterward. It is part of the negotiation process that the *UN Hospitality Rider* initiates. That is, relationship work does not first begin during the artistic process. It begins in the conscious shaping of the conditions under which this process can take place.

2 <https://unitednetworks.eu/un-resources>

Artistic Community Work Is Also Democratic Infrastructure

For SdF, relationship care is the structural prerequisite for a multi-perspective artistic practice in which different societal positionings are not only represented, but also productively placed in relationship to each other. They remain fragile without time, financing and reliable infrastructure – and are frequently supported by those who are already working under precarious conditions.

If cultural spaces are spaces for democracy – in which perspectives come face to face, are negotiated and become visible – then relationship care is also a part of democratic infrastructure. Long-term community work thus needs more than project funding. It needs reliable framework conditions: funding continuity, sustainable networks and the structural support of independent individuals. The stability from which trust, negotiation and a shared practice can grow is first created by the interaction of these levels.

We do not know in advance what a resilient “we” looks like. It is not created solely through invitation or intermittent visibility, but instead through time, through negotiation and through the readiness to endure uncertainties together. Long-term relationship care is the condition for ensuring that actual connection is formed from diversity. And connection is, especially times of austerity and political polarization, lived democratic practice.

Production Questions About Artistic Community Work

Practical Tools for Orientation

Artistic community works poses practical questions on many levels. In light of this, we have asked people from the practice about their experiences and assessments. In the following, you will find insights, advice and specific approaches for realization from Laura Böttinger (artistic director of the Dance On mediation program and project manager of the feasibility study *Bewegte Pflege* at Bureau Ritter), Ronja Kindler (independent theater maker and theater educator at Theater der Jungen Welt, Leipzig), Justus Rothlaender (dramaturg at Theater der Jungen Welt, Leipzig) and Trang Trần (project manager at Berlin Mondiale - Gesellschaft für transkulturelle Kunst und partizipative Räume gUG).

Tips for Making Theater With Children and Young People | 1 Ronja Kindler, Justus Rothlaender, Theater der Jungen Welt, Leipzig

Children and young people are not a homogenous group – there can be different needs and tasks based on the composition of a group. Our tips are guides for orientation and make no claim to completeness.

Group Size and Schedule

- Determine the group size according to the team's capacities before the start of the project
- Have at least one supervisory person, plan for emergencies and stand-ins
- Take note of the rhythm of the school year (school vacations are well-suited for intense rehearsal periods, do not schedule final rehearsals during examination periods)

Info and Consent

- Have participation forms filled out at the beginning of the project (allergies, medications, contact information for parents and guardians, emergency contact)
- Prepare a declaration of consent to photo, video and, if applicable, audio recordings. Name all co-operation partners and all media where recordings will be published. Have the parent or legal guardian sign for participants under the age of 18

- Hand out letters for schools as in a timely manner if asking for students to be released for rehearsals

Parents and Legal Guardians as Project Partners

- Hand out the rehearsal schedule, project information and important forms to the participants and parents or legal guardians early on (digital and print) and discuss them
- Organize an information night for parents and legal guardians at the beginning and/or in the middle of the project
- If applicable, have a form signed ensuring reliable attendance at rehearsals, final rehearsals and performances
- Also consider: how often can participants miss rehearsals or meetings? How can participants leave the project?

Communication

- Always use bcc for mailing lists
- Take note of the General Data Protection Regulation for messenger services for work with children and young people

Conclusion

- Organize an evaluation and farewell meeting with the group
- If applicable, communicate subsequent opportunities such as additional projects, meetings, et cetera

What Does Participant Acquisition Mean?

Trang Trần, Berlin Mondiale

Acquisition for community projects starts with presence and the search for existing connections to the target group.

Example: with an open dance opportunity for displaced young people, the critical person is a young adult who provides assistance with homework – seen by the young people as a peer, with existing relationships and situated knowledge. Their trust makes the access possible in the first place.

In projects with young people, drop-in formats, where people can take part flexibly without advance registration, are often especially effective. Commitment is reached gradually and it can be learned when and how the young people are available. In doing so, the roles must be clear: acquisition is not the job of the artists, but they have to understand what awaits them – who they will collaborate with and what the needs and options are.

Tips for Making Theater With Children and Young People | 2 **Ronja Kindler, Justus Rothlaender** **Theater der Jungen Welt, Leipzig**

- Safety Measures and Special Needs
- Check: does the institution where the project takes place have a safety concept and what does it say? If necessary, adapt this specifically to your own project and communicate it all participants as well as parents and guardians
- Consider: who could the participants turn to confidentially outside of the project?
- Avoid one-on-one rehearsal situations (individual participants and the rehearsal director)
- Ask about the needs of the group in terms of the rehearsals and performances (through questionnaires, conversations, et cetera)

Avoid Typical Pitfalls in Your Own Planning

Trang Trần, Berlin Mondiale

- “Young people” are not a target group. Be specific: get to know the people that you want to work with.
- Eliminate your own hidden biases when it comes to the living realities of your participants. Go to where they are and observe.
- Relationship work cannot be accelerated. Plan time for this accordingly.
- Target groups and partners should be part of the conceptualization phase and must already take part in it.

How to Cooperate with Performance Venues?

**Laura Böttinger, Dance On/
*Bewegte Pflege***

In community projects that include cooperation with a performance venue, it is recommended to have a lead time of about half a year for the joint planning of rehearsals and access times. Ticketing options such as free tickets or reduced tickets should be negotiated and potential dates should be reserved already in the first conversations with the performance venues. The individual needs of the participants and the project team must be communicated clearly and taken into account by everyone. If project participants are not independently mobile, accompanied routes or transport options must be discussed that can be integrated seamlessly in the setting (for example, barrier-free access points, disabled parking). Open communication is absolutely necessary for a successful cooperation in which the performance venue and the participants have a mutually productive experience.

Tips for Making Theater With Children and Young People | 3 **Ronja Kindler & Justus Rothlaender, Theater der Jungen Welt, Leipzig**

- Specific Legal Requirements Based on Age Group
- Note the conditions of the Jugenschutzgesetz (the German Protection of Young Persons Act, JArbSchG), § 6
- For commercial events and repertory productions, labor protection applies for young people between the ages of 6 to 15 and/or 16 years of age.
- Permission and/or approvals of exceptions must be requested from the corresponding supervisory authority in accordance with § 6 JArbSchG
- Note the guidelines for rehearsal times (4 hours), rest times (14 hours) and places to take breaks
- Make contact with the personnel department/scheduling department/supernumeraries department and apply for permissions early on (consent from parents and legal guardians and schools, pediatrician certificates)
- When compulsory full-time schooling is no longer mandated (between 15 and 16 years of age), § 6 JArbSchG no longer applies.

Make Connections With Intermediaries

Trang Trần, Berlin Mondiale

Bringing together people from different fields can be challenging. How can, for example, an organization for mobile youth social work, urban practitioners and a church community with outdoor areas in the neighborhood come together to create an area for experimentation for young people for their own needs in the neighborhood?

Intermediaries can provide specific support here because they function as a platform: they network and bring together what the sorting according to genre in the funding separates. The core service of Berlin Mondiale is translation – linguistically, culturally, institutionally. It moves between specialist discourse and lived reality, between the logistics of funder and community. Neighborhood management and district coordination organizations work similarly – people work within them who know both the district logistics as well as the neighbors in the neighborhood. It is definitely worth looking specifically for intermediary structures like these and to incorporate them within the project development early on.

In the case described above, the different entities approached Berlin Mondiale independently from each other. Thanks to the sponsoring that was found, a pop-up in public space was created that brought together youth social work, urban art and neighborhood structures – financed through multiple departments and which would not have been able to be realized by any of the structures involved on their own.

Publishing Images and Video Material

Laura Böttinger, Dance On/*Bewegte Pflege*

In the context of community productions, the publication of images and video material not only provides transparency for funding, but also increases the reach and relevance of artistic work with laypeople. Consent for this is required from all participants; for participants who are minors, this consent is provided by the parents or legal guardians. For people who are not able to speak, a legal representative (for example a relative or a caregiver) must be consulted. In terms of content, the purposes, usages, places of publication and rights for the participants should be recognizable. The conditions of the General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR, apply regardless of the age groups.

From Experience: Community & Neighborhood Projects

What Moves You? Lucia Marzec

At the girl's club Schilleria, girls* and women* between the ages of 7 and 21 discover their own form of expression through street dances. With a focus on hip-hop and krump, they learn how to move creatively – spaces are created for feelings and self-empowerment. Subsequent visits to Junges Tanzhaus Berlin open up new perspectives on dance in the neighborhood.



You can learn more about all of the community and neighborhood projects here: pap-berlin.de/en/community-and-neighborhood-projects

Out of the Old Age Home and Into the Theater Dance On Participation/ Laura Böttinger

Dance On Participation brings live dance closer to the inhabitants of old age homes: In workshops that take place in advance of the theater visit, the participants dance together, discuss and share knowledge about theater. A shared reflection takes place after the performance. This strengthens the participation, exchange with and visibility of older people in the cultural landscape.

Service

In the following pages, you will find a variety of information centers and points of contact, information and tools as well as funding institutions and tools within the context of artistic community work. These tips are intended to provide helpful points of connection, not least of which for your own further research.

Information Centers and Points of Contact

Information Center of the Berlin Performing Arts Program

This is the central point of contact for all questions concerning artistic work as a freelancer as well as questions concerning production and funding opportunities. Free support for artists and culture makers working within the independent performing arts community

→ pap-berlin.de/en/what-we-offer/information-center

Bundesverband Soziokultur e. V.

This is the professional umbrella association for sociocultural work in Germany. Cultural policy advocacy, advisement, networking, programming and projects for sustainable work

→ soziokultur.de

Bundesverband Theater im Öffentlichen Raum e. V. (BUTIÖR)

Is dedicated to strengthening the performing arts in public space. Networking, communication, knowledge transfer, training, cultural policy, advocacy

→ theater-im-oeffentlichen-raum.de/en

Diversity Arts Culture

Design and consultation office for diversity development. Advisement of cultural institutions and Berlin's Senate Department for Culture, education programs, empowering artists and cultural workers who experience exclusion
→ diversity-arts-culture.berlin/en

Kreativ Kultur Berlin

Berlin's advisement center for artists and culture makers, first point of contact and a central guide to issues pertaining funding and financing
→ kreativkultur.berlin/en

kultur_formen

Support of artistic projects by and with children, young people as well as projects from civil society. Opportunities for funding, networking and further education
→ kulturformen.berlin/en

Landesfreiwilligenagentur Berlin e. V.

Berlin's development and competence center for voluntary, honorary and civil engagement. Advisement, qualification opportunities, networks, campaigns
→ landesfreiwilligenagentur.berlin

Landesvereinigung Kulturelle Kinder- und Jugendbildung (LKJ) Berlin e. V.

Political umbrella organization for educational institutions for children and young people with a focus on art and culture. Professional events, advisement for project development and financing, support for inclusion- and diversity-oriented opening
→ lkj-berlin.de

Netzwerkstelle Urbane Praxis

Networking, support and advisement of Berlin initiatives and projects in the field of urban practice. For self-organized cultural community spaces and open spaces, public-oriented, cultural and urban transformations
→ urbanepaxis.berlin

Verband für sozial-kulturelle Arbeit e. V. – Landesverband Berlin (VskA Berlin)

Association of Berlin neighborhood centers and district centers. The coordination of professional exchange, content-based further development, further education and advisement on community and neighborhood work
→ vska.de/berlin

Platforms and Tools

Freiraum-Fibel

Start-up support for urban DIYers. Information on legal conditions (approval procedures, contracts, liability questions), tips, examples
→ www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/DE/veroeffentlichungen/sonderveroeffentlichungen/2016/freiraum-fibel.html

Förderfinder Kreativ Kultur Berlin

Current funding and financing programs in the fields of culture and business. Across all sectors, industries and sources from Berlin, Germany, the EU and worldwide
→ kreativkultur.berlin/en/funding-database

Kubinaut

Berlin platform for cultural education for everyone interested in art, culture, education and youth as well as formats with active participation of children and young people.

→ kubinaut.de

Raumsonde Berlin

Digital platform to help find locations and obtain permission for public events. Approval procedures, location data, application processes

→ berlin.raumsonde.org/en/home

United Networks – UN Resources

Various publications by United Networks (UN) and partners on the needs of racialized and marginalized artists and culture makers in funding systems and institutional structures

→ unitednetworks.eu/un-resources

Commerzbank Stiftung

Project funding for cultural institutions in the areas of cultural mediation, strategy development and transformation processes, participation and diversity, community building and outreach programs.

→ commerzbank-stiftung.de/foerderung/kultur

Fonds Soziokultur e. V.

Funding of sociocultural projects, projects with people under 25 years of age, processes of organizational development, international cooperations with organizations from the United Kingdom

→ www.fonds-soziokultur.de/en

Funding Institutions and Instruments

Berliner Projektfonds Kulturelle Bildung

Annual funding of artistic projects with children, youth and young adults up to 27 years of age.

→ kulturformen.berlin/foerdern/berliner-projektfonds-kulturelle-bildung

Berliner Projektfonds Urbane Praxis (BPUP)

Annual project funding since 2021 in the area of cultural urban development.

→ projektfonds-urbane-praxis.berlin

About the Authors

Laura Böttinger is the artistic director of the Dance On mediation program and project manager of the feasibility study *Bewegte Pflege* at Bureau Ritter. She was a jury member in the funding program *Tanzland* of Kulturstiftung des Bundes and has created participatory projects for communities as a dance mediator.
→ dance-on.net/partizipation

Chang Nai Wen works as a director and producer in theater, live art and film, founded Sisyphos in 2008 and is a co-founder of World Wide Lab and United Networks. In her transcultural work, she develops formats where encounters, dialogue and changes of perspective are negotiated artistically.

Leyla Ercan is an advisor with a focus on diversity-oriented organization development and critical cultural practices in art and culture. As a culture manager, she realizes cultural opportunities (festivals, readings, exhibitions with and for BIPOC communities). Most recently, she worked as a diversity agent at Staatstheater Hannover.

Ronan Favereau is an actor, director and theater educator. He was educated at the Berlin University of the Arts and works between France and Germany in the fields of the independent performing arts, production and cultural education. His artistic practice takes place at the crossroads of theater, mediation and collaborative formats.
→ ronanfavereau.com

Eva Hartmann was a producer, manager and managing director of, amongst others, Gob Squad Arts Collective and works today as a coach, mentor, moderator, mediator, educator, networker and outside eye. In addition, she accompanies individuals, groups and organizations on topics surrounding the idea of “change”.
→ evahartmanncoaching.com

Ronja Kindler is an independent theater maker and is employed as a theater educator at Theater der Jungen Welt, Leipzig (BA social work, MA theater education). She works at the interface of theater and participation with all generations, develops theater pieces and workshops, moderates, performs and creates her own formats.

Justus Rothlaender studied dramaturgy at the Ernst Busch University of Theater Arts Berlin. After assistantships at, amongst others, the Finnish National Theatre, Helsinki, and Schaubühne Berlin, he worked as a dramaturg at Theater an der Parkaue from 2019 to 2022. He has worked at Theater der Jungen Welt in Leipzig since 2022.

Christina Runge works as a dramaturg and producer in the fields of performance, audio drama and opera with, amongst others, Gob Squad, Ted Hearne/Daniel Fish, Schorsch Kamerun, Diana Nücke and Masha Qrella and develops programming formats with Akademie der Wissenschaften Berlin, HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz and others.

Michael Tibes is a music producer, audio engineer, co-founder of FuzzFactory Tonstudio and the director of multimedia at Sisypheos, der Flugelefant. He combines sound, image and technical systems to create atmospheric environments for participatory and immersive formats.

Trang Trần is a project manager at Berlin Mondiale, an organization for transcultural art and participatory spaces. She has many years of experience in discrimination-sensitive artistic mediation, community-oriented cultural work and design thinking.
→ berlin-mondiale.de

Christopher Utpadel works at the crossroads of performing arts, education and civil society. He was the director of Audience Development/Cultural Education at HELLERAU until 2023. Together with Natalia Peña, he then founded edugrapes with a focus on artistic and participatory process design.
→ edugrapes.com

About Us

With its diverse range of opportunities, the Berlin Performing Arts Program increases the visibility of artistic work, bundles knowledge, creates synergies and initiates cooperations – within the independent performing arts community and beyond. We offer advisement sessions, workshops and networking opportunities free of charge, both for newcomers as well as professionals. You can find more about these in our calendar and on our website at
→ pap-berlin.de/en

Additional Offerings of the Berlin Performing Arts Program

Freie Szene Kompass

In the Freie Szene Kompass, our digital industry directory of the independent performing arts community, you will also find an overview of current funding programs, advisement opportunities, additional training options and much, much more.
→ pap-berlin.de/freie-szene-kompass

Advisement for Newcomers

Or would you like to sign up directly for an initial advisement session? Then just send an email to us and we will find the right event for you:
→ beratung@pap-berlin.de
→ pap-berlin.de/en/what-we-offer/information-center

Performing Arts Guide

The Performing Arts Guide provides an overview of the diversity of Berlin's independent performing arts community. Alongside portraits of festivals, get-togethers and initiatives, it also includes a directory of performance venues.
→ performingarts-guide.de/en

Berlin Rehearsal Space Platform

The Berlin Rehearsal Space Platform is the digital marketplace for everyone looking to offer or use rehearsal spaces in Berlin.
→ proberaumplattform-berlin.de

Theater Scoutings Berlin

The monthly schedule of programming of Theater Scoutings Berlin provides audience members with new perspectives on the artistic work and institutions of the independent performing arts community with, amongst others, artist talks, rehearsal visits, workshops and tours of performance venues.
→ theaterscoutings-berlin.de

The LAFT Berlin Newsletter

You can also subscribe to the LAFT Berlin newsletter to stay up-to-date with everything that the Berlin Performing Arts Program has to offer. To do so, just send an email with the subject "Subscribe to Newsletter" to us at
→ newsletter@laft-berlin.de

Imprint

A Publication of the Berlin Performing Arts Program

Published by:
LAFT Berlin – Landesverband freie darstellende Künste Berlin e. V.
Grünberger Str. 39
10245 Berlin

Program Director:
Janina Benduski

Conceptualization and Editing:
Florian Hohnhorst, Linus Lutz

Coordination and Editing:
Léonie Jeismann

German Copy Editing:
Neila Kemmer

Translation:
Daniel Brunet

Graphic Design:
AG Grafik –
Philip Jursch and Lennart Lofink

Printed by:
Gallery Print

Editorial Deadline:
April 2, 2026

ISBN 978-3-9822040-3-1

The Berlin Performing Arts Program is a program of LAFT Berlin – Landesverband freie darstellende Künste Berlin e. V. The Performing Arts Program – Performing Arts Berlin in Focus (PAP PAFO) is supported by the State of Berlin – Senate Department for Culture and Community) from funds of the European Fund for Regional Development (EFRE) within the program “Strengthening the Innovation Potential in Culture III (INP III)”.

Performing Arts
Programm
Berlin

LAFT Landesverband freie
darstellende Künste Berlin e.V.
BERLIN

Stichtiftung
für Kultur und
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