

ENCATC IN CONTACT



The new study out in 2017 on "How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations" was undertaken by a consortium led by ENCATC member, Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, together with Culture Action Europe, ECCOM and Intercult. ENCATC was also proud to be an associate partner of this project. We sat down with member Alessandra Gariboldi from Fondazione Fitzcarraldo who was one of the study's authors. We wanted to learn more about how the study came about, interesting outcomes for ENCATC members, and what's next.

How did this study on "How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations" come about?

Fondazione Fitzcarraldo has been working on audience development (AD) since the late 1990s, but our perspective had a turning point in the last ten years. Our research activities led us to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of ineffectiveness of so many projects aiming to increasing cultural participation. Despite there were more and more valuable experiences in Europe and beyond, they didn't seem to be able to affect the cultural behaviors of citizens as a whole. Why did this happen? Why did so many resources and creativity not achieve the expected outcomes – or just limited ones?

Our understanding of the issue was shaped over time also thanks to the opportunities of working at the European level on the ADESTE project. ADESTE represented a milestone: together with ENCATC, The Audience Agency, Meltingpro, CKI, Deusto University, and Goldsmiths University of London (most of them also ENCATC members), we worked on the professional profile of the Audience Developer. Through ADESTE we focused on competences and skills required to face the challenge of audience development in Europe.



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This is why we were so excited to run a study on AD, that was funded by the European Commission in 2015. The study "How to place audiences at the center of cultural organisations" was in a way a 'natural' evolution of previous research, also involving partners like ECCOM, Culture Action Europe, Intercult and many experts in the field, among them ENCATC members in Croatia, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom.

Which are the main results of the study?

The main results of the study are both a comprehensive interpretive framework for AD – a complex cross-disciplinary issue that involves management, marketing, education, accessibility and social studies – and the collection of 30 case studies – a Euro-

pean map of how cultural organisations are reacting to new challenges.

Why should ENCATC members be interested in the study?

We consider ENCATC members as one of the main target group for our findings, since we always looked into the 'big issue' of increasing cultural participation mainly as a capacity building challenge: AD is not about developing audiences, but much more about developing cultural organisations. The collected case studies can really help understanding how others did actually change their organisations – competences, roles and functions of their staff – to tackle the challenge.

If we consider that increasing participation is also about social and financial sustainability of the cultural sector, it's easy to understand that education and

TO REMEMBER:

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

IS A STRATEGIC APPROACH

ADDRESS TRADITIONAL AND NEW AUDIENCES

USES DIFFERENT TOOLS & STRATEGIES

REQUIRES PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

IS A TRIGGER FOR CHANGE

PLACING AUDIENCES AT THE CENTRE

IS NOT A "SPECIAL PROJECT"

IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A SINGLE DEPARTMENT

COMES WITH A PRICE TAG

IS AN INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION AND REQUIRES:
TAKING RISKS, INVESTING IN RESOURCES & FACING A
CHANGE PROCESS



Image developed from the Study's summary document, page, 6

training centres have the huge responsibility to build capacities for the present and future professionals, according to the cultural sector's needs – and being able to build deeper relationships with their audiences is a crucial success factor for cultural organisations. A challenge they shall be able to face with up-to-date, complex competences.

Where and how do you hope the study will have the greatest impact?

We hope the study will impact at least at three different levels. First, our purpose is to contribute to a general deeper understanding of AD, which is a buzz word for many, but still not fully understood at all levels.

Second, we think this can be a tool for cultural organisations to make a convincing case for becoming more audience-centred, and for a clear understanding that this shift has strong implications in terms of organizational thinking and staff competences. We hope they can be inspired by how others did or are doing, its effectiveness and the evidence that this can happen without compromising artistic ambitions.

Third, we hope the study will help in shaping the policy level, supporting 'good' audience development with a clear understanding that AD is a long term process thus requiring long term commitment also beyond short term frame of single projects.

What is next? How do you want to build on the important work you have accomplished so far?

We are now working on a new EU funded project, "CONNECT", together with the University of Deusto (project leader), Goldsmiths University of London, Adam Mickiewicz University, MeltinPro, CKI, Asimetrica, ENCATC, and The Audience Agency, whose aim is to tackle one of the main challenges raised by ADESTE, that is to test and bring into the Higher Education system a model of training in AD able to prepare future cultural managers and 'connect' them to the labour market. The project started last January, and will last 36 months. Stay tuned!

DOWNLOAD THE STUDY HERE:

<http://engageaudiences.eu/materials/>

VISIT THE STUDY WEBSITE:

<http://engageaudiences.eu/>

The "Study on audience development – How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations" is a study by Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, together with Culture Action Europe, ECCOM and Intercult, as a consortium, developed in the framework of the Creative Europe programme. It was published in April 2017.

Alessandra Gariboldi is

a senior researcher and consultant in the fields of visitor studies and cultural project evaluation, with a primary focus on audience engagement and participatory approaches. She's Coordinator of the Research and Consulting Department of Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, and collaborates with the Cultural Observatory of Piedmont, Italy. She's been involved as researcher and trainer in three EU funded project on audience development: ADESTE (Audience Developer Skills and Training in Europe), CONNECT (Connecting Audiences) and Be SpectActive, whose aim is to test and develop performing arts projects actively involving audiences in programming. She is adviser and mentor within national funding programs for empowering cultural organizations through entrepreneurship and a deeper relation with communities, such as IC_Cultural Innovation, CheFare, Culturability and fUNDER35, all promoted by Italian private institutions. She is passionate about the arts and strongly believes they must be at the very heart of social development. Among her publications/essays on visitor studies and impact evaluation of cultural policies, as co-author: "Study on Audience Development - How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations" (2017), "Mapping of practices in the EU Member States on Participatory governance of cultural heritage", to support the OMC working group under the same name (Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018).

