Name: Blivande Idéer AB (Hugi Asgeirsson)

Application: 24163

Applied amount: 19000

Status: awaiting requisition

Basic information

1.1. Name of the network
Ambassadors of Do-ocracy and Participatory Design

1.2. A short description that clearly states the main objective of the network
To develop cultural centers founded on principles of do-ocracy and participatory design. Such centers decentralize decision making and have different needs than centers with centrally curated programs. They also rely on unhindered convening in physical space which has been hard in the pandemic, calling for development of participatory processes online. We bring together three participatory cultural centers, one partner in online community building and one network of 80+ cultural spaces.

1.3. Estimated start date:
01.01.2021

1.4. Estimated completion date:
01.12.2021

1.5. List the confirmed institutions/persons who are part of the network (also state the country of each partner/participant)
Blivande, Stockholm, Sweden
Blivande is a creative hub for participatory culture and art in Stockholm that cultivates an ecosystem that allows those who participate to realize their projects, find collaborators, and make a living. Blivande occupies a 1000 m2 building and a 600 m2 public plaza in the Frihamnen port of Stockholm.

Institut for (x), Aarhus, Denmark
If(X) is a self-managed and self-built environment and a city within the city. If(X) is continuously redefined by and adapted to the needs and activities of its members. The area contains 600 members, 90 studios and workshops, 43 creative businesses and
15 associations.

Guvuhver, Reykjavik, Iceland

Guvuhver is a newly founded initiative in Iceland, inspired by Institute for X, aiming to build a similar creative hub in Guvunes. This area has been designated by the city of Reykjavik to become a place for culture and art in the future.

Trans Europe Halles, Lund, Sweden
One of the oldest and most dynamic cultural networks in Europe that have been at the forefront of repurposing abandoned buildings for arts, culture and activism since 1983. TEH has 127 members in 36 different countries across Europe, and 20 of those member organizations are in the Scandi-Baltic region.

Edgeryders, Tallin, Estonia
Edgeryders is a social enterprise living in symbiosis with an online community of thousands of hackers, activists, radical thinkers and doers, and just normal people that want to make a difference.

1.5.1. The applicant's country of residence/domicile

• Sweden

1.6. Project description (500 - 4 000 characters)
Participatory culture hubs are very crossdiciplainary in artistic expression, including for example music, performance, video art, architecture, sculpture. There are also particular expressions of participatory art like reality games, role playing, immersive art events. All of these expressions share that the content is not centrally curated but decided by its participants.

Cultural centers have traditionally been either hierarchical institutions or organized as democratic associations and assemblies that communally decide on a direction that is then carried out by the appointed leadership. Participatory cultural centers that use do-ocracy as a governing principle put most of the deciding power of what should be done in the hands of those who are willing to do it and support them with the required resources. New events, stages and even buildings can emerge at participatory cultural centers without central planning. This means that there must be a good process in place for coordination and deliberation.

Opportunities gained by such networks are vast. Collaborative principles and a collective mindset means that independent actors are given access to resources that would otherwise not be available to them. Giving artists and cultural entrepreneurs access to a free space in which they can grow and develop with access to a network of resources and skills is invaluable.

Co-creative cultural centers can have immense impact on the cities they operate in. One example of this is that Institut for (x) collaborated with the mayor's office to create "Bydelskontoret" / The City District Office to support and consult the development process of the city district where X is located. As this district is under massive urban development, Bydelskontoret is supporting the creative and cultural vision of Aarhus. As such, Institut for (x) and its processes of participatory design and co-creation have contributed to the vision and direction of Aarhus as a whole.

Our purpose with this network is to exchange experiences and plans between three such networks in three countries, at three stages of maturity, and to use what we learn from this exchange to foster further emergence of such initiatives.

This network will take the format of short term embassies of the spaces at the locations of the

others. Institut for (x) and Guvuhver will visit Blivande at the same time for a week of mutual activities, events and exchange. Subsequent embassy visits will happen at Institut for (x) and Guvuhver. At each location, two representatives will be the ambassadors for the institution while others will be able to connect remotely. At each location, around 30 people will be involved from each institution.

Furthermore, the pandemic has challenged the principles on which participatory centres are founded, as such initiatives are dependent on action-based ongoing interaction between stakeholders and creators. There is an urgent need for developing online practices that keep the participatory culture intact while still enabling ongoing co-creation. To address this we bring in Edgeryders - a European online community building network based in Estonia - to co-develop participatory processes for online collaboration at co-creative cultural centers. Our collaboration with Edgeryders also means that the program can go ahead, even if travel would not be possible.

Finally, these results will be spread to cultural centers around Europe through the Trans Europe Halles network of more than 80 centers around Europe, many of which are in the Nordic countries. This will enable more participation and co-creation in the culture and arts in the Nordic countries and in Europe as a whole.

1.7. Main field of art:

• Other, what? Participatory culture

1.8. Have you applied for funding from Nordic Culture Point before?

• No

Information about the network and the activities

2.1. Describe the relevance of the network for yourself/your organisation and your field of work?
Hubs for participatory culture and art that are largely self-organized and decentrally programmed are not well understood and patterns for success of such hubs are not readily available. Cultural hubs with central programming can be evaluated on the number of tickets sold or visitors that pass through its gates, while the aim of a hub for participatory culture is to drive engagement and to blur the border between artist and audience. In the best of world a participatory hub has no spectators, only active participants and contributors. This sort of cultural practice has immense value to encourage creativity and innovation but it can be a challenge to communicate these gains.

Blivande, as a newly started hub for participatory culture, wishes to learn from the more established Institut for (x), and to pass on learnings to the fresh initiative of Guvuhver. Furthermore, these three hubs wish to collaborate with Edgeryders and Trans Europe Halles to understand how participatory practices can function with a stronger online component. This is an area in which Blivande has the strongest expertise in the network, together with Edgeryders, and we wish to develop our methodologies into tried and tested toolkits of participatory culture hubs.

2.2. What are the contributions by the partners to the network?

Institut for (x) is the oldest and most established of the hubs in the network. Its contribution is to show how a temporary initiative can survive for a decade to finally become a permanent institution. This involves a large degree of strategy, not least in the area of maintaining dynamism and participatory ethos while scaling and formalizing into an institution.

Blivande was founded two years ago, but has grown quickly, and is on its way to become self-sustaining. Two success factors have contributed - the practices of participatory art festivals like the Borderland and Burning Man, as well as innovative online tools. Blivande will contribute this hybrid approach to the network.

Guvuhver is a fresh initiative, starting from scratch in an abandoned warehouse in the outskirts of Reykjavik. As a new initiative, it holds only potential and no is largely a fresh canvas. To have such an initiative in the network is invaluable as it allows for a testing ground for what is learned.

Trans Europe Halles is possibly the strongest network of independent cultural hubs in Europe, and through its participation in the network it will contribute a powerful channel for dissemination of learnings, as well as invaluable feedback.

Edgeryders has been a groundbreaking social innovation network in Europe for almost a decade, with particular focus on online community management. Working with Edgeryders allows for a strong offer on how to translate participatory culture to an online setting.

2.3. Describe the network's activities and time schedule (what, where, when?)

Planning phase, January to February. We plan the program for the three subsequent embassy visits and coordinate with participants, venues and invited speakers.

Our first embassy visit will be at Blivande in March. Participants from Iceland and Denmark visit Blivande for a week of activities, aiming to learn from the Blivande network, answering four central questions for each hub:

1. Evaluate the patterns and methods of co-creation and participation. What has been successful and what could be improved?
2. How can hubs for participatory culture be active and constructive co-creators of their cities?
3. How can the participatory processes that are developed at these hubs be used for culture, art and society as a whole?
4. How can online tools be used to enable a participatory ethos and governance, making these organizations transparent and accessible?

This format will be repeated for embassy weeks at Institut for (x) and Guvuhver. These embassy visits will involve a larger group (min. 30 people) from the hub that is being visited, along with relevant invited people from the host city. Representatives from Edgeryders and Trans Europe Halles will participate in at least one of the three embassies.

After the last embassy week, a period of evaluation follows to collect learnings and prepare for dissemination of results. Finally, a seminar will be organized in October through the Trans Europe Halles network to share the results with other cultural hubs, and documentation will be made available online. Continued engagement with the participants and further learning will happen on the Edgeryders online platform.

2.4. Which Nordic and/or Baltic countries participate in the project?

• Denmark

• Iceland

• Sweden

• Estonia

2.6. Please indicate if the network has participants from any of the following countries or regions:

2.7. Do your activites have stated goals for gender equality?

• Yes

2.7.1. If yes, how will you work with gender equality?
Do-ocratic culture can be associated with assertiveness, 140% attitude and courage. These qualities often feel more natural for men to embody. When this was put to light, Institut for (x) started curating toward a more equal environment in terms of gender. This year 10-15 women are part-taking in a 'Phenomenal Women Workshop', which is a leadership-programme for active members and key-persons at Institut for (x). These learnings will be shared with the network so that similar programs can be evaluated and implemented.

2.8. Do your activities have stated strategies for sustainable development?

• Yes

2.8.1. If yes, how will you work with sustainable development?
According to the World Green Building Council, 11% of worldwide carbon emissions come from construction. This means that the embodied carbon footprint of a building is immensely important. If a building is in use for longer, more value is extracted from that embodied carbon. Putting these buildings to use instead of tearing them down might be among the most efficient sustainability actions one can undertake. Most hubs for participatory culture are built with reused materials like old containers, or re-fashioned industrial buildings. One of the questions we want to answer with our activities is how participatory culture and art can influence cities to put more of these resources into the hands of their citizens, to be reused and remade.

2.9. Do your activites have stated strategies for inclusion of children and young people?

• Yes

2.9.1. If yes, how will you work with inclusion of children and young people?
Public places of culture and art where young people are participants and not consumers are sorely needed. Young generations are well fitted to be co-creators, as they have grown up with an

internet culture that blurs the boundaries between creator and audience. However, these expressions are mainly possible in the digital realm. Our hubs aim to empower young people to run their own independent initiatives in a nurturing environment, where they are co-creating with professional artists and creators. Our experience is that with these methods children and young people are given a sense of possibility and opportunity that seldom to be found in a more consumeristic context. We wish to formulate how such strategies can be carried out and expanded further by encouraging support for participatory culture as a category of cultural funding.

Communication, marketing and additional information

3.1. How is the network planning to disseminate information about its activities and the results thereof (aim/objectives, strategies, working methods and expected impact of the activities)?

Each embassy week is documented, and central questions are answered. This material is synthesized into an online seminar, open to the public. We also release a PDF of the findings of the network and launch an online communication platform (through Edgeryders) where these results can be built on and discussed among the network participants and future collaborators.

Our aim and objective with dissemination of these materials and learnings is to encourage increased confidence in the methods of participatory culture and art. Our ultimate goal is for this to eventually lead to participatory art to be considered as its own category in public culture funding.

We ensure wide and impactful distribution through the established channels of Trans Europe Halles and Edgeryders. Our objectives also work in synergy with the objectives of Trans Europe Halles in 2021, as they seek to establish a "meta-hub" of participatory hubs in Europe.

3.2. What communication channels do you plan to use (e.g. social media, websites, events, advertising, publications or similar)?

Each center uses its communication channels (Facebook, Instagram, Website) in order to inform its local network. In addition, Trans Europe Halles will disseminate the materials through its highly influential channels.

TEH
129 Members in 37 European Countries
12K Facebook followers
3 K Twitter
5K Newsletter Subscribers

Nordic Hub
20 members in Scandi-Baltic

Institut for (x)
600 members
15 associations
8k Facebook followers - 18k monthly reach

3k Instagram followers

Blivande
320 members
2.5K Facebook followers - 4K monthly reach
600 Instagram followers

Edgeryders
6000 community members
4.9k Facebook followers
3k Instagram followers
4.6k Twitter followers

3.3. Link to website where additional material about the network is accessible:

Insititut for (x)
https://institutforx.dk

Blivande
https://www.blivande.com

Edgeryders
https://www.edgeryders.eu

Trans Europe Halles
https://www.teh.net

Financing

4.1. The applied for amount and total budget in Euro
Applied amount: 19000
Budget: 38620

4.3. Specified budget and financing plan

Budget - Sheet1.pdf Budget for the entire program, all partners